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# CLASS-BOOK

OF

# ENGLISH LITERATURE;

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, CRITICAL NOTICES, AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXTRACTS.

For the Use of Schools and Students.

BY

ROBERT ARMSTRONG,
ENGLISH MASTER, MADRAS COLLEGE, ST. ANDREWS;
AND
THOMAS ARMSTRONG,
EDINBURGH;
AUTHORS OF "ENGLISH COMPOSITION" AND "ENGLISH ETYMOLOGY."

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# PREFACE.

To minuteness of detail, or an exhaustive treatment, in any of its aspects, of a subject so extensive as English Literature, the present volume makes no pretensions. If the leading features of the various Epochs—which are arranged according to obvious and familiar landmarks—and the substantial character of the principal writers, be regarded as sufficiently indicated, with due reference to the limits and purposes of the work, the authors will consider that they have made a satisfactory approximation to the accomplishment of their object. The means of forming some acquaintance with our literature itself, as well as with its history, should form an essential element in every Class Book of this description; and in order to render the study of such writers as Chaucer and Spenser interesting to the student, an analytic sketch has been given of a portion of their principal works; while it was thought that the same method might advantageously be adopted with respect to one of the plays of Shakspeare. In the choice of extracts, a preference has naturally been given to the Poets; and in the selections from the writers of the present century, their adaptation to the purposes of recitation and elegant reading has to a considerable extent been kept in view. In Prose the specimens have been confined chiefly to subjects of a didactic description.

In the Anglo-Saxon, Semi-Saxon, and Early English Periods, it is believed that undue prominence has not been bestowed upon

the origin and growth of our educational institutions, the state of learning at the various stages of its progress, and the narrative of early romance literature. It may also be observed, that the arrangement of the Poets into Schools, in the introductory chapter to the First Modern Period, is presumed to present the characteristics of the various groups in a convenient and interesting form, without assuming that they can be classified with such precision as the genera and species of plants.

The authors may be permitted to add, that they have not entered upon their task without a due sense of its importance and of their own responsibility; and they have failed to render manifest the spirit brought to bear upon it, if it should not appear that their allegiance to the monarchs of mind is reverential and catholic. They have mainly confined themselves to the congenial office of pointing out the excellences of the various authors, without conceiving it to fall within their province to touch upon their defects, excepting when a qualified estimate seemed to be imperatively demanded. They have scarcely deemed it necessary to allude to the depreciatory theory for some time prevalent respecting that school without which English Poetry would have resembled the stately Corinthian column wanting its graceful capital; and they heartily respond to the noble canon with which Mr. Palgrave, in his elegant contribution to our poetical collections, concludes one of his acute and philosophical summaries: "When once the mind has raised itself to grasp and to delight in excellence, those who love most will be found to love most wisely."

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# CLASS BOOK

OF

# ENGLISH LITERATURE.

## ANGLO-SAXON.

(450–1066.)

### CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

Historical Summary—Conversion of the Saxons to Christianity—Progress of learning—Establishment of schools during the seventh and eighth centuries—Seminaries of Canterbury, Wearmouth, and York—Decline of learning in the ninth century—Its revival by Alfred—Its condition in the tenth century.

The history of our literature carries us back to the earliest period of the history of our country, which first emerged from the gloom of antiquity about the time of Julius Caesar, nearly half a century before the Christian era. The inhabitants, at that time called Celts or Britons, spoke a language which is still extant in different parts of the British Isles, being distinguished in its several varieties or dialects as Gaelic, Welsh, Irish, and Manx.

In the first century of the Christian era Britain became subject to Rome, and was under its dominion till near the time of the Saxon invasion. This event, which took place about the middle of the fifth century, obliterated nearly every trace of Roman civilisation. The inhabitants were butchered or compelled to seek

shelter in the remoter parts of the island, Wales, and Cornwall; Christianity was replaced by the appalling superstitions of Scandinavia; and the language of the native Britons was superseded by that of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors.

In the progress of the English language from Anglo-Saxon to its latest form, it has been designated by terms corresponding to its changing aspect. From the time of its first introduction in the fifth century to the Norman Conquest, it is called Anglo-Saxon; from Anglo-Saxon it passed into Semi-Saxon; from Semi-Saxon into Early English; from Early English into Middle English, which has been finally succeeded by that form which retains the name of Modern English.

The Saxons having, after a prolonged and desperate struggle, succeeded in vanquishing the Britons, did not avail themselves of the opportunity of cultivating the arts of peace to that extent which their success afforded them. No sooner were they released from all danger of being attacked or resisted by the natives, than the different tribes turned their arms against each other, and commenced those indiscriminate and barbarous massacres which Milton declared to be as worthy of commemoration as battles between kites and crows. These contentions being at length terminated by the union of all the small kingdoms, the progress of civilisation received a new check from the inroads of the Danish pirates; so that from the first settlement of the Saxons to the time of Alfred, the arena of English history presents to the view a succession of wild beasts, at one time rending each other with the fury of hunger, and at another, in sheer obedience to their innate propensity for slaughter. And although a brief period of peace was secured during the life of that illustrious prince, his death was the signal for the renewal of those Scandinavian invasions, which for a time overthrew the Saxon dynasty, and spread devastation over the land.

It was under such unfavourable auspices that Anglo-Saxon literature was developed. The introduction of letters as well as of civilisation dates from the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity. In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine to England

with forty other monks to carry out this pious design. The efforts of his missionaries were attended with signal success. Ethelbert, King of Kent, and ten thousand of his subjects, were converted in one year. A cathedral was founded at Canterbury, of which Augustine was appointed first Archbishop. In 604, Melitus was consecrated Bishop of London, and Justus, Bishop of Rochester. The British Church, that had hitherto kept aloof, now came to the assistance of the Italian mission. Iona and Bangor sent forth their zealous preachers among the heathen Saxons. A second mission from Italy arrived in 634, and in a few years after, the Christian faith had been adopted by the various kingdoms of the Heptarchy. Learning followed in the track of Christianity. A school was established at Canterbury by order of Gregory, who supplied it with books. This seminary of Kent was the first National School of England, and it soon became famous as a nursery of education. It was most noted in the days of Archbishop Theodore, who arrived in Britain in the year 668. He was followed shortly after by his friend Hadrian, a scholar of great parts, described by Malmesbury as "a fountain of letters and a river of arts." Theodore was a great patron of learning, and was himself an author of some repute. By his exertions and those of Hadrian, the foundation of scholarship was laid in England. Through them all the larger and better monasteries were converted into seats of learning both for the clergy and the laity. Much earnestness must have been displayed at this time in the acquisition of knowledge, for we find Bede in the following century extolling the happy days when Kent was the fountain of instruction to the rest of England; and this mental activity was the more remarkable when we remember that letters were almost, if not altogether, extinguished everywhere else in Europe. Wearmouth, the scene of Bede's long student-life, was an offshoot of the establishment at Canterbury; and, like it, was instrumental in producing scholars of considerable eminence.

The most celebrated school of the eighth century was that of York, which was greatly indebted to Archbishop Egbert. He founded the library so noted at the time for the classical and

theological works it contained. The great reputation of Alcuin, who was appointed president of the institution in 766, attracted scholars to it from every quarter. The course of study comprised instruction in the Holy Scriptures, grammar and composition, classics, arithmetic and dialectics; but from the great scarcity of books, progress, with few exceptions, was neither rapid nor extensive.

From the commencement of the ninth century down to the reign of Alfred, there was a general declension both in piety and learning. Whatever may have been the primary source of this decay, the devastations of the Danes, who plundered the monasteries and dispersed the monks, can alone adequately account for the deplorable ignorance which prevailed when that prince ascended the throne. According to his own account, very few Churchmen in the kingdom were able to interpret the Latin Service. The efforts of this wise and energetic King to rescue learning from the degraded condition into which it had fallen, can hardly be estimated. He gathered round him learned men from all parts of Europe; he rebuilt the monasteries, established a system of public school education, and enjoined all classes to acquire instruction. His grand aim was the creation of a literature in Anglo-Saxon; and so indefatigable were his labours, especially in the work of translation, that he may almost be allowed the merit of having accomplished his object. The beneficial results of his exertions did not continue long after his death. His immediate successors, Edward the Elder and Athelstan, were worthy imitators of their great predecessor; but the curse of incessant strife bore too hard upon the country, and crippled all attempts at national education. The schools of Glastonbury and Winchester, too, continued to flourish under the patronage of Dunstan and Ælfric; yet their influence was not sufficient to prevent the apathy towards literary pursuits that was creeping over the nation. The tenth century closed in darkness. With a brief revival in the days of Canute, the literature of the Anglo-Saxons was virtually at an end.

## CHAPTER II.

### AUTHORS AND WORKS.

Character of Anglo-Saxon literature—Latin—Aldhelm—Bede—Alcuin—John Scotus—Anglo-Saxon Poetry—Beowulf—Gleeman's Song—Battle of Finsborough—Cædmon's Poem—Judith—Death of Byrthnoth—Victory of Athelstan—Extracts—Versification—Anglo-Saxon Prose—Alfred's and Ælfric's Works—Saxon Chronicle—Extracts.

ANGLO-SAXON literature consisted of a considerable body of writings, both in prose and verse. The manner in which it was developed was in some respects peculiar. Taking into consideration the character and circumstances of the people, we should naturally have expected it to abound in warlike poems and legends; but of that kind of composition we have only a few examples. After Christianity had replaced the hideous mythology brought from Scandinavia, literature was diverted almost entirely into the channel of religion and morals; and this influence is found to pervade the works of Anglo-Saxon authors throughout the whole of the period.

#### I.—LATIN.

The first productions naturally appeared in Latin. It was the language which had accompanied the Italian mission, and in which the services of the Church were performed; and the monks were compelled not only to learn it, but to become acquainted with its valuable stores. Containing all the systematic knowledge that then existed, it was, of course, the great repository from which was drawn the instruction communicated to the Anglo-Saxons. Unfortunately, the models that had been set up after the decay of Roman literature were not of true classic mould. Homer, Virgil, and Cicero were supplanted by Fortunatus, Isidorus, and other writers that have been characterized as belonging to the Lower Empire. The language, besides, had everywhere been corrupted by the monks; and this degeneracy is abundantly manifest in the

writings of the Anglo-Saxons. Aldhelm and Bede are their two most noted Latin authors.

Aldhelm belonged to the royal house of West Saxony, being related to Ina, King of Wessex. He was born in Wiltshire, and was formed in the schools of Theodore and Adrian. In 705 he was appointed bishop of Shireburn in Dorsetshire. He was a voluminous writer, his works being composed chiefly for the information of the people. Theology, arithmetic, rhetoric, and grammar were his principal subjects. In spite of the pedantry and barbarity of his style, his writings display a considerable amount of talent.

Bede, surnamed the Venerable on account of his learning and piety, was born in 672, and died in 735. At the early age of seven he entered the Monastery of St. Peter at Wearmouth. From this he was shortly afterwards removed to the twin Monastery of St. Paul at Jarrow, and here he spent in seclusion the remainder of his days. His life was consecrated to literary pursuits, which he only intermitted to discharge the pleasing duty of instructing his fellow-monks. His name is the greatest in the ancient literature of Britain, his works being possessed of extraordinary merit. They included homilies, lives of the saints, commentaries on books of Scripture, with treatises on grammar, rhetoric, poetry, arithmetic and chronology. His great production was the *Ecclesiastical History*, which was afterwards translated into Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred. Although it is called the Ecclesiastical History, it is not confined to the affairs of the Church, but relates all the public transactions falling within the Anglo-Saxon period. Native chroniclers and contemporary monks are his principal authorities, but he is also indebted to Roman writers. As a genuine record of the development of the national mind at this early period of its history, it is a work of the highest value. Its style, too, although void of elegance, is comparatively free from the affectation and pedantry which disfigure the pages of most of the Latin authors of this era.

Alcuin and John Scotus or Erigena were two of the most eminent Latin writers of this age. The one was an Englishman,

and the other an Irishman; but both were called to labour on the Continent. Alcuin received his education at York, in which city he is supposed to have been born about the year 735. He afterwards became master of the school and keeper of the library. His learning attracted the notice of Charlemagne, who invited him to France. Here he was chiefly occupied as a public teacher, having established famous schools at Aix-la-Chapelle and Tours.

As regards both literature and philosophy, John Scotus was one of the remarkable men of the dark ages. His early history is not well known; but he is supposed to have studied for a time in the schools of England. He latterly resided at the Court of Charles the Bald, who reigned in France during the ninth century. The philosophical works of Erigena are characterized by great boldness and subtlety of intellect.

## II.—ANGLO-SAXON POETRY.

Anglo-Saxon poetry is interesting, but rude. The monotony of the metre, the device of alliteration as a substitute for rhyme, the repetition of epithets, and even the character of the imagery, although at times bold and effective, all denote the infancy of the art.

Three poems, *Beowulf*, the *Gleeman's Song*, and the *Battle of Finsborough*, have descended to us from a period anterior to the arrival of the Saxons in Britain. The first and most remarkable of these is a heroic poem describing the adventures of Beowulf, a Danish prince. It is a wild old romance, furnishing an impressive picture of the manners of the Saxons before they left their continental seat, as well as of the gloomy horror of their pagan superstitions. We find in it an early specimen of that style of poetry which the Scalds of a subsequent period were to enhance by greater fervour, and adorn by bolder and more sublime imagery. The *Gleeman's Song* and the fragment on the *Battle of Finsborough* are of the same character as *Beowulf*, describing in vivid colours the customs of our heathen ancestors before they had come under the power of Christianity.

Cædmon was the first Anglo-Saxon author of note who composed in his own tongue. He lived in the seventh century, and was first a herdsman, but afterwards a monk in the Abbey of Whitby in Northumbria. His history is interesting, although partaking largely of the marvellous. It is related, that when the harp went round after the labours of the day, Cædmon would retire from the company ashamed of his inability to play or sing. One evening, having in despair taken refuge among the cattle, he dreamt that a stranger appeared and asked him to sing. The cowherd having declared that the task was beyond his power, received from his unearthly visitor a command to hymn the wonders of creation. From that hour he became a poet, his muse being devoted to religious subjects. His principal production is a metrical paraphrase of portions of Scripture, and is conceived in some parts with poetic spirit. It begins with the expulsion of the rebel angels, and then takes up the creation of the world, the fall of man, the deluge, the lives of Abraham, Moses, and Daniel. From the resemblance of some of his descriptions to passages in *Paradise Lost*, it has been suggested that his poems were not unknown to Milton. The *Paraphrase of Judith*, the slayer of Holofernes, is another religious poem that manifests both feeling and imagination. Of both of these poems, however, critics have professed to discover the source of the most imaginative passages in the mythology and poetical fictions of the Norse. The affinity to Scandinavian poetry is perhaps more apparent in the *Fragment on the Death of Byrthnoth* and the *Ode on the Victory of Athelstan*, two warlike poems of the tenth century, and the only examples of the kind that are now extant. Though abounding in the epithets and poetical common-places of the Scaldic songs, these two pieces are, nevertheless, purely historical narratives, without any pretension or approach to the epic form, unless we recognise a kind of dramatic effect in the speeches which distinguish the first. The change that had gradually taken place in the habits of the Anglo-Saxons since their settlement in England, and the themes to which the Anglo-Saxon Muse had more exclusively devoted herself, rendered her unfit to emulate the romantic and

warlike strains of her Scandinavian sister, whose Parnassus was the field of slaughter, and whose votaries were frenzied with rapture, when amidst "the harvest of swords"—the tempest and whirlwind of battle—they saw in vision those heavenly virgins, the Valkyries, beckoning them to receive the chaplet of immortality in the halls of the warrior-god Odin.

### SATAN IN HELL.

CÆDMON.

| | |
|---|---|
| Weoll him on innan | Boiled up within him |
| Hyge ymb his heortan; | *His* thought about his heart; |
| Hat wæs him utan | Hot was without him |
| Wrathlic wite. | *His* dire punishment. |
| He tha worde cwæth; | Then spake he words; |
| Is thes ænga stede ungelic swithe | This narrow place is most unlike |
| Tham othrum the we ær cuthon, | That other that we formerly knew, |
| Hean on heofon-rice, | High in heaven's kingdom, |
| The me min hearra onlag, | Which my Master bestowed on me, |
| Theah we hine for tham Alwealdan | Though we it for the All-powerful |
| Agan ne moston. | May not possess. |
| Romigan ures rices; | *We must* cede our realm; |
| Næfth he theah riht gedon, | Yet hath he not done rightly, |
| That he us hæfeth be-fylled | That he hath struck us down |
| Fyre to botme | To the fiery abyss |
| Helle thære hatan; | Of the hot hell; |
| Heofon-rice benumen, | Bereft us of heaven's kingdom, |
| Hafath hit gemearcod | Hath decreed |
| Mid mon-cynne | With mankind |
| To gesettanne. | To people it. |
| That me is sorga mæst, | That is to me of sorrows the greatest, |
| That Adam sceal, | That Adam shall, |
| The wæs of eorthan geworht, | Who of earth was wrought, |
| Minne stronglican | My strong |
| Stol behealdan, | Seat possess, |
| Wesan him on wynne, | Be to him in delight, |
| And we this wite tholien, | And we endure this torment, |
| Hearm on thisse helle. | Misery in this hell. |

### THE REPLY OF BYRTHNOTH TO THE HERALD OF THE DANES WHO DEMANDED TRIBUTE.

| | |
|---|---|
| Byrthnoth mathelode, | Byrthnoth spake, |
| Bord hafenode, | *His* shield *he* raised, |
| Wand wacne æsc, | *He* brandished *his* slender spear, |
| Wordum mælde; | *His* words *he* uttered; |

| | |
|---|---|
| Yrre and anræd, | Stern and resolute, |
| Ageaf him andsware. | *He* gave him answer. |
| Gehyrst thu sae-lida | Hear, thou mariner, |
| Hwæt this folc segeth; | What this people sayeth; |
| He willath eow to gafole | They will to you for tribute |
| Garas syllan, | *Their* weapons give, |
| Ættrynne ord, | *The* poisoned point, |
| And ealde swurd, | And ancient sword, |
| Tha heregeatu the eow | The equipments-of-war which to you |
| Æt hilde ne deah. | In battle shall not avail. |
| Brim-manna boda, | Of the men of ocean herald, |
| Abeod eft ongean, | Announce in return, |
| Sege thinum leodum | *A* message to thy people, |
| Miccle lathre spell; | *A* much more hostile declaration; |
| That her stynt unforcuth | That here stands undaunted |
| Eorl mid his werode, | *An* earl with his army, |
| The wile gealgian | Who will defend |
| Ethel thysne | This soil, |
| Æthelrædes eard, | *The* country of Ethelred, |
| Ealdres mines, | My prince, |
| Folc and foldan. | *His* people and territory. |
| Feallan sceolon | Shall fall |
| Hæthene æt hilde. | *The* heathen in *the* conflict. |
| To heanlic me thinceth, | To me it seems base, |
| That ge mid urum sceattum | That with our property |
| To scype gangon | To *your* ships *you* should retire |
| Unbefohtene; | Unassailed; |
| Nu ge thus feor hider | Now thus far hither |
| On urne earde | Into our land |
| Inbecomon. | Having advanced. |
| Ne sceole ge swa softe | Nor will you so softly |
| Sinc gegangan; | *Our* treasure capture; |
| Us sceal ord and ecg | Us shall point and edge |
| Ær geseman, | First decide between, |
| Grim guth-plega, | In *the* grim battle of death, |
| Ær we gofol syllon. | Before we tribute give. |

This passage may be taken as a specimen of the style and versification of Anglo-Saxon poetry. The chief characteristics of the style were inversion and ellipsis. These will be apparent by glancing at the translation, which must be read without the words in italics in order to obtain the literal rendering. The versification was more peculiar than the style. In place of rhyme, alliteration was employed. The lines were associated in couplets,

there being a corresponding or rhyming first letter in one of the important words of each line. This was the fixed law. Generally, however, there were two recurring letters in the first line, answering to that of the second, which constituted the chief letter, and was always single. In the first couplet of our quotation, the sub-letter B in Byrthnoth rhymes with the chief letter B in Bord; and in the second, the sub-letter W in Wand is repeated in Wacne, both rhyming with the W in Wordum, the chief letter of the second line. In this alliteration, consonants appear more frequently than vowels. The metrical structure was regulated by accent, and not by quantity. The lines varied in length, but no line contained less than two emphatic or root syllables, with one or more unemphatic. The alliteration, of course, was thrown as much as possible upon the emphatic syllables. Although there was apparently no regular measure in the versification, many lines admit of scanning. The feet most frequently met with are trochees and dactyls.

## III.—ANGLO-SAXON PROSE.

Anglo-Saxon prose is free from the turgidity of its poetry, and the style in general is clear. The greater number of compositions are translated from the Latin. The most celebrated writers were Alfred and Ælfric.

King Alfred's productions, as has been observed, were chiefly translations. Of these the most noted are Bede's *History*, the *Regula Pastoralis* of Gregory the Great, the work of Boethius *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, and the *Ancient History* of Orosius. The *Regula Pastoralis* was intended as a guide to the clergy. In it the spiritual shepherd is directed as to his dealings with his flock, while at the same time he is encouraged in the discharge of his duties. Boethius was amongst the last of the ancient classics, and his work became the text-book of pious scholars during the middle ages. It was translated by Alfred for the purpose of infusing a more healthy tone into the religion of his day than that of the legendary lives of the saints. The translation is accompanied by commentaries in which Alfred descants

upon government in a liberal and enlightened strain; and by reflections that breathe an exalted spirit of religion and morality. His preface to the work is considered one of the purest specimens of Anglo-Saxon. Orosius terminated his summary of *Ancient History and Geography* with the year 416; Alfred has brought down the information to his own time, and otherwise remodelled the book, adding amongst other things the description of a voyage towards the North Pole, in which he gives a sketch of various nations existing in the ninth century.

ÆLFRIC was of illustrious family, and became Archbishop of Canterbury in the tenth century. He was devoted to education, and taught for some time in the school of Winchester. He possessed the gift of composition, and was the author of a number of original works. Besides homilies and other theological treatises, he produced two educational text books. These were, *A Glossary of Latin and Saxon Words*, which was long used as a vocabulary in English schools; and a Saxon version of a *Latin Grammar*.

One of the most important works of this period was *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*—a series of records written in their own tongue by the contemporary monks, and containing much valuable historical information. They were begun, so far as we can judge, about the time of Alfred, and were carried on to the year 1154.

Anglo-Saxon remains comprise various other productions, both in prose and verse. They consist in great part of homilies, lives of the saints, and other religious works; treatises on grammar, astronomy, and medical botany; the laws of Ina, Athelstan, and other kings; and the romance of Apollonius of Tyre.

### ALFRED ON KING-CRAFT

BOETHIUS.

Thæt byth thonne cyninges and-weorc and his tol mid to ricsianne; thæt he
This is then a king's materials and his tools with to govern; that he

hæbbe his land full-mannod. He sceal hæbban ge-bed-men, and fyrd-men, and
have his land full-manned. He must have prayer-men, and army-men, and

weorc-men. Thu wast thætte butan thissum tolum nan cyning his craft ne
work-men. Thou knowest that without these tools no king his craft not

mæg eythan. Thæt is eac his and-weorc thæt he hæbban sceal to tham tolum;
may show. This is also his materials that he have must besides the tools;

tham thrym ge-ferscipum bi-wiste. Thæt is thonne heora bi-wist; land to
for the three companies provisions. This is then their provision; land to

bugienne, and gifta, and wæpna, and mete, and ealo, and clathas, and ge-hwæt
inhabit, and gifts, and weapons, and meat, and ale, and clothes, and whatever

thæs the tha threo ge-ferscipas be-hofiath. Ne mæg he butan thissum thas
of that which for the three companies is needful. Not may he without these the

tol ge-healdan, ne butan thissum tolum nan thara thinga wyrcan the
tools preserve, nor without these tools none of those things work which

him be-boden is to wyrcanne.
to him commanded is to work.

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## ALFRED AND THE DANES.

### SAXON CHRONICLE.

Tha feng Ælfred Æthelwulfing to West-Seaxna rice; and thæs ymb
Then took Alfred son of Ethelwulf to the West Saxon's kingdom; and that after

ænne monath gefeaht Ælfred cyning with ealne thone here lytle werode
one month fought Alfred king against all the army with a little band

æt Wiltoune, and hine lange on dæg geflymde, and tha Deniscan ahton
at Wilton, and them long during the day routed, and then the Danes obtained

wæl-stowe geweald. And thæs geares wurdon nigon folc-gefeoht gefohten
of the battle-field possession. And this year were nine great battles fought

with thone here on tham cyne-rice be suthan Temese, butan tham
with the army in the kingdom to the south of the Thames, besides those

the him Ælfred, and ealdormen, and cyninges thegnas oft rada onridon
in which Alfred, and the aldermen, and the king's thanes oft inroads rode-against

the man na ne rimde. And thæs geares wæron of-slegene nigon eorlas, and
which one nothing accounted. And this year were slain nine earls, and

an cyning; and thy geare namon West-Seaxan frith with thone here.
one king; and this year made the West Saxons peace with the army.

## CHAPTER III.

### LANGUAGE AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Origin of Anglo-Saxon—Elements of Admixture: Celtic, Latin, Danish—Synopsis of Grammar.

Anglo-Saxon is an offshoot from the Gothic or Teutonic branch of the Indo-European family of languages. The two great classes of the Teutonic are the Scandinavian and the German. The Scandinavian is represented by the Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish, or what are called the Norse tongues. The German is subdivided into Mœso-Gothic, High German, and Low German. Mœso-Gothic has long ceased to be spoken. High German has its representative in Modern German; while Low German comprises the Old or Continental Saxon, Anglo-Saxon, English, Frisic, Dutch, and Flemish. Of the ancient Low German tongues, Anglo-Saxon is the only one we possess entire; and it has the greatest interest for us, as forming the basis of Modern English. It is difficult to determine whether the language was a direct importation from the Continent, or a new tongue formed by the amalgamation of the dialects of the various tribes who settled in Britain after the Saxon invasion. This event is supposed to have taken place about the year 450, and the stream of invaders did not cease to flow for nearly a hundred years,—the last settlement recorded being that of the Angles under Ida, who landed in Scotland in 547, and took possession of the country between the Tweed and the Forth. No remains of Anglo-Saxon, however, have descended to us from a period earlier than the middle of the seventh century; but the first specimens show the language to have acquired by that time regularity and completeness of structure, along with copiousness and strength of vocabulary. During a period of four hundred years it continued to be spoken and written with comparatively little change in its general structure. It could scarcely, however,

avoid receiving accessions to its vocabulary from the various races with whom the Saxons came successively into contact.

The first of these were the Native British, from whom a considerable number of words of Celtic origin were derived. Many of them are topographical, and are exemplified in the names of places, beginning with *aber*, the mouth of a river; *ard* or *aird*, a hill or promontory; *bal*, a village; *ben*, a mountain; *blair*, a field; *caer*, a fort or town; *cairn*, a heap of stones, a rocky hill; *dun*, a hill; *glen*, a narrow valley; *kill*, a cell, or chapel, or burying-ground; *lin*, a deep pool; *llan*, a church; *ros*, a promontory or peninsula; *strath*, a broad valley; *tre*, a town. The following words, along with others, have also been claimed as belonging to the Celtic of this period:—*basket*, *button*, *clout*, *funnel*, *gown*, *gruel*, *mop*, *rail*, *tackle*.

The next element of admixture was the Latin; and it consisted of words left by the Romans when they abandoned Britain, and of those introduced by the Italian monks. The first referred to military matters, and were few in number,—the terminations, *chester*, *cester*, or *caster*, for *castra*, a camp; *coln*, for *colonia*, a colony; *port*, for *portus*, a harbour; and *street*, for *strata* (*via*), a levelled road, being nearly all. The second related to the services of the Church, and may be traced in such words as *candle*, *chalice*, *cloister*, *mass*, *minster*, *monk*, *psalter*, *provost*.

The last importation of words in this period was due to the Danes, whose influence upon the language was very much confined to names of persons and places, chiefly in the midland and northern counties. Places ending in *by*, a borough or town; and *thorpe*, a village; and surnames terminating in *son*, indicate a Scandinavian origin.

Anglo-Saxon differs in several points from its modern representative. The chief distinction between the two languages consists in the highly diversified inflection of the one, and the almost total absence of that feature in the other. In Anglo-Saxon the article, noun, adjective, pronoun, and verb are all highly inflected, while Modern English possesses only a few relics of this variety of form. These are exemplified more in the pronoun and verb

than in the noun, which only retains the *'s* of the possessive, the plural *s*, and the irregular plurals. The following synopsis will more particularly illustrate the difference between the two tongues in this respect :—

The definite article in Anglo-Saxon answers for the demonstrative and the relative, being like the German *Der, Die, Das.* It has ten variations of form.

Nouns are divided into two orders—Simple and Complex. The Simple has one declension of three classes for the three genders ; the Complex two declensions of three classes each :—

SIMPLE OR WEAK ORDER.—DECLENSION I.

EXAMPLES.—Steorra, *star ;* tunge, *tongue ;* eage, *eye.*

| | SINGULAR. | | | PLURAL. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1st Class. *Masc.* | 2d Class. *Fem.* | 3d Class. *Neut.* | 1st Class. *Masc.* | 2d Class. *Fem.* | 3d Class. *Neut.* |
| *Nom.* | Steorra | tunge | eage | Steorran | tungan | eagan |
| *Gen.* | Steorran | tungan | eagan | Steorrena | tungena | eagena |
| *D. & A.* | Steorran | tungan | eagan | Steorrum | tungum | eagum |
| *Acc.* | Steorran | tungan | eage | Steorran | tungan | eagan |

COMPLEX OR STRONG ORDER.—DECLENSION II.

EXAMPLES.—Smith, *smith ;* spræc, *speech ;* word, *word.*

| | SINGULAR. | | | PLURAL. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1st Class. *Masc.* | 2d Class. *Fem.* | 3d Class. *Neut.* | 1st Class. *Masc.* | 2d Class. *Fem.* | 3d Class. *Neut.* |
| *Nom.* | Smith | spræc | word | Smithas | spræca | word |
| *Gen.* | Smithes | spræce | wordes | Smitha | spræca | worda |
| *D. & A.* | Smithe | spræce | worde | Smithum | spræcum | wordum |
| *Acc.* | Smith | spræce | word | Smithas | spræca | word |

COMPLEX OR STRONG ORDER.—DECLENSION III.

EXAMPLES.—Sunu, *son ;* denu, *vale ;* treow, *tree.*

| | SINGULAR. | | | PLURAL. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1st Class. *Masc.* | 2d Class. *Fem.* | 3d Class. *Neut.* | 1st Class. *Masc.* | 2d Class. *Fem.* | 3d Class. *Neut.* |
| *Nom.* | Sunu | denu | treow | Suna | dena | treowu |
| *Gen.* | Suna | dene | treowes | Suna | denena | treowa |
| *D. & A.* | Suna | dene | treowe | Sunum | denum | treowum |
| *Acc.* | Sunu | dene | treow | Suna | dena | treowu |

The adjective is declined like the noun. It has two inflections —the definite and the indefinite. The definite is used when the adjective is preceded by the definite article, by any other demonstrative, or by the possessive pronoun. The indefinite was employed in all other cases.

The pronoun surpasses the noun and adjective in variety of inflection. The first and second persons of the personal pronoun have a dual number, being the only words in Anglo-Saxon so appointed. The first person is thus declined :—

| | Singular. | Dual. | Plural. |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Nom.* | Ic | Wit | We |
| *Gen.* | Min | Uncer | Ure |
| *D. & A.* | Me | Unc | Us |
| *Acc.* | Me | Unc | Us |

The verb has two orders, like the noun. The Simple or Weak forms its imperfect by adding *ode* (*ede*), *de*, or *te*, to the root; and the past participle by adding *od* (*ed*), *d*, or *t*. The Complex or Strong forms the imperfect by a vowel change, while the past participle ends in *n* or *en*. The former is divided into three classes, forming one conjugation; the latter into two conjugations, of three classes each. We give as examples the first class of each conjugation :—

SIMPLE OR WEAK ORDER.—CONJUGATION I.

*Pres.* Lufige (love)—*Imperf.* Lufode—*Past Part.* Gelufod.

INDICATIVE MOOD.

*Present.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ic lufige | We lufiath |
| Thu lufast | Ge lufiath |
| He lufath | Hi lufiath |

*Imperfect.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ic lufode | We lufodon |
| Thu lufodest | Ge lufodon |
| He lufode | Hi lufodon |

IMPERATIVE.

| | |
|---|---|
| Lufa | Lufiath |
| —— | Lufige |

SUBJUNCTIVE.

*Present.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Lufige | Lufion |

*Imperfect.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Lufode | Lufodon |

INFINITIVE.—Lufian.

GERUND.—To lufigenne.

PARTICIPLES.

*Pres.* Lufigende.

*Past.* Gelufod.

## COMPLEX OR STRONG ORDER.—CONJUGATION II.

*Pres.* Brece (break)—*Imperf.* Bræc—*Past. Part.* Gebrocen.

INDICATIVE MOOD.

*Present.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ic brece | We brecath |
| Thu bricst | Ge brecath |
| He bricth | Hi brecath |

*Imperfect.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ic bræc | We bræcon |
| Thu bræce | Ge bræcon |
| He bræc | Hi bræcon |

IMPERATIVE.

| | |
|---|---|
| Brec | brecath |

SUBJUNCTIVE.

*Present.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Brece | Brecon |

*Imperfect.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Bræce | Bræcon |

INFINITIVE.—Brecan

GERUND.—To brecanne

PARTICIPLES.

*Pres.* Brecende
*Past.* Gebrocen

## COMPLEX OR STRONG ORDER.—CONJUGATION III.

*Pres.* Binde (bind)—*Imperf.* Band—*Past. Part.* Gebunden.

INDICATIVE MOOD.

*Present.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ic binde | We bindath |
| Thu bintst | Ge bindath |
| He bint | Hi bindath |

*Imperfect.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ic band | We bundon |
| Thu bunde | Ge bundon |
| He band | Hi bundon |

IMPERATIVE.

| | |
|---|---|
| Bind | bindath |

SUBJUNCTIVE.

*Present.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Binde | Bindon |

*Imperfect.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Bunde | Bundon |

INFINITIVE.—Bindan

GERUND.—Bindanne

PARTICIPLES.

*Pres.* Bindende
*Past.* Gebunden

# SEMI-SAXON.

(1066–1250.)

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

Historical Summary—Condition of the Saxons—Progress of learning—Its encouragement by the Normans—Establishment of secular schools—First universities, Oxford and Cambridge—General remarks.

When William of Normandy first intimated his design of conquering his rightful inheritance, as he termed the kingdom of England, he did not conceal his intention of doing what he liked with his own. No sooner was he crowned than he proceeded to divide the territory of the Saxons according to the principle laid down by the lion in the fable. The landed property was thus classified: First came that which had belonged to the Saxon proprietors who had fallen at Hastings, and which was therefore forfeited; next, that which belonged to the Saxon survivors of that battle, and which consequently fell to him in the same way; and, lastly, that belonging to those Saxons who had neither fallen nor fought at Hastings, which he seized by right of conquest. As the result of this division, most of the native nobility and gentry were speedily reduced to beggary, and the Normans were rewarded with towns by the dozen, castles by the score, and estates by the hundred. The north of England having risen against its oppressors, the country between the Tees and the Humber experienced such vengeance as it rarely falls within the scope of history to record. The south fared no better. A royal

hunting-park was wanted, and a tract of country in Hampshire, measuring ninety miles in circumference, and containing thirty-six populous parishes, was converted into a wilderness. The violation of the game laws was punished with mutilation; "for William," says the *Saxon Chronicle*, "loved the tall deer as if he were their father." The marriage of Henry I. with the Saxon princess Matilda produced no amelioration of the condition of the people; and their son, the young Prince William, declared his intention of making them draw the plough like oxen when he succeeded to the throne. During the civil wars of Stephen and Matilda, their miseries, as described in the *Chronicle*, seem to have reached a climax. They were compelled to build the castles which afforded shelter to their plunderers, and those who were suspected of having goods were starved to death in dungeons, or hung up by the feet over a fire.

While thus intent upon the subjugation of the Saxons, the Normans did not neglect the cultivation of learning. A new era in literature may be said to have commenced with the Conquest. The Conqueror himself encouraged letters, and many of the ecclesiastics who followed in his train were accomplished scholars for the times in which they lived. For this they were indebted to the educational seminaries that had survived in France from the days of Charlemagne, as well as to the impetus given to learning on the Continent by the Arab schools of Spain. The first act of the Conqueror was to fill the higher offices in the cathedrals with educated Churchmen, and to revive the schools that were attached to them. For this purpose the Anglo-Saxon clergy were removed; a good reason being, unfortunately, too often found for doing so, in the immorality and ignorance that prevailed amongst them. In this work William was assisted by Lanfranc, the first Archbishop appointed by him to the see of Canterbury. To this prelate, as well as to his successor Anselm, the country was much indebted for the promotion of letters. Their zeal and activity in the establishment of schools and the instruction of the monks have been recorded with general commendation. It will give us some idea of the work they had to do, when we are told

that Lanfranc found it necessary to give out books to the monks, and compel them to read under penalty of a fine.

The vast increase of religious houses in the twelfth century was the means of giving a wide dissemination to the rudiments of learning; but the institution of schools apart from monasteries was the first great step towards a general diffusion of knowledge. These were in one or two instances established by private individuals, but the Church now took upon itself to provide in this way for the general instruction of the people, chiefly in the cities and towns. At first they were superintended by the bishops, but were not generally so efficient as they might have been. The act that first gave them a professional character, and at the same time procured for them the services of eminent preceptors, was the appointment in 1179 of a superintendent or scholastic, as he was called, who had charge of all the schools in a diocese.

The history of individual seminaries in this period is rather obscure. We read of those of St. Albans, York, Westminster, Oxford, and Cambridge. It was about 1200 that Oxford, and 1227 that Cambridge became transferred in character from the school to the university. They had been places of note long before these dates. Oxford seems to have been in existence for about two centuries before, and had become a place of great resort in the days of Henry II. In the thirteenth century it was second only to Paris. The establishment of these seats of learning as universities gave a true dignity to letters, which was confirmed by the charters that incorporated their students and rendered them independent of the Church.

Other circumstances conspired to render this period favourable to the advancement of letters. The successors of William were princes who had received a good education, so far as the times afforded, and who gave encouragement to its progress. For two hundred years nothing occurred to retard the development of literary genius, which here and there shone out with more vigour and distinctness than it had done for centuries before. Many events combined to justify the remark that it was a transition era, which prepared Europe for that general revival of learning which

took place in the fifteenth century. The rise of a middle class, and the extension of privileges and trade; chivalry, with its love of honour and inculcation of manly virtue; the crusades, with their enlightening and emancipating influence; the rise of a vernacular literature in France; the revival of the study of Latin in its purity; the study of law; and even the dry discussions of the scholastic philosophy;—all tended to promote a spirit of intellectual activity and inquiry.

# CHAPTER II.

## AUTHORS AND WORKS.

I. Latin:—Revival of classical learning in the eleventh century—Its decline in the thirteenth—Lanfranc—Anselm—William of Malmesbury—Henry of Huntingdon—Roger de Hoveden—Matthew Paris—Geoffrey of Monmouth—Roger Bacon—Gesta Romanorum—Giraldus Cambrensis—John of Salisbury and others. II. Norman French, or Anglo-Norman:—Origin of Romance languages—Romance literature of the Troubadours—Romance literature of the Trouvères or Norman minstrels—Chroniclers—Geoffrey Gaimar, Benoit, Wace—Fabliaux of Marie of France—Arthurian romances—Anonymous productions—Influence of Romance literature. III. Semi-Saxon, or Saxon English:—Condition of the native tongue—Scantiness of its literature—Saxon Chronicle—Brut of Layamon—The Ormulum—Extract.

### I.—LATIN.

The domain of letters was for some time after the Conquest entirely usurped by the Latin. Most of the writers were Churchmen; and their productions include a great variety of subjects, the chief being theology, philosophy, history, biography, grammar, and rhetoric, together with excellent compositions in Latin verse. The study of the ancient authors in their purity had revived classic taste in the eleventh century, so that in the twelfth we find several writers of a high order of style; very different from the inflated and redundant Latin of the Anglo-Saxon era. In the thirteenth century, however, Latin began to decline; a circumstance to be attributed chiefly to the prevalence of the scholastic philosophy, which so absorbed the attention of the scholars of the day that it interfered for a time with the progress of polite literature. Of Greek little was known. The only exceptions to the general ignorance of this language were one or two scholars who flourished at the close of the period. To this total unacquaintance with Greek may in great measure be ascribed the backward condition of science, the first translations of Greek works, in geometry, astronomy, and physical science, having been effected through the Arabic, and not directly from the ancient tongue.

Lanfranc and Anselm were the most eminent theological

writers. When a monk in the Abbey of Bec, Lanfranc's fame as a dialectician had attracted the attention of William of Normandy, by whom he was transferred to the Monastery of Caen. On the deposition of Stigand in 1070, he was called by the Conqueror to the see of Canterbury. He died in 1089, at the advanced age of eighty-four. Lanfranc was succeeded in the primacy by Anselm, who has been styled the father of scholasticism.

This age is remarkable for the number of monastic registers and historical records. The most trustworthy are those of William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon in the twelfth century, and Roger de Hoveden and Matthew Paris in the thirteenth.

William of Malmesbury was librarian of the monastery from which his name is taken. He remained here during the greater part of his life, occupying much of his time in historical research. His contributions to history and biography are numerous and important. The principal are the *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and the *Historia Novella*, which form a continuous narrative of English history down to the year 1142. They are carefully written as to facts, but the style partakes largely of the exuberance of Anglo-Saxon Latinity.

Henry of Huntingdon was Canon of Lincoln and Archdeacon of Huntingdon. His *History of England* reaches to the end of the reign of Stephen, and is a work of value to the student. It is founded on Bede, and greatly enlarged from other sources. Henry was a miscellaneous writer, his poetical productions being also deserving of praise, as containing good imitations of Martial.

Roger de Hoveden is supposed to have been a native of Hoveden or Howden in Yorkshire, and to have acted as chaplain and secretary to Henry II. His *Annals* commence with the year 731, where Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* concludes, and are continued to 1201, in the reign of King John. From the official position which he occupied, he was enabled to contribute many documents of worth to the history of his time.

Matthew Paris was a monk of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Albans. He flourished during the reign of Henry III., and was favourably known at Court. He had the reputation of a

scholar as well as a historian. The two principal works usually ascribed to him are the *Historia Major* and the *Historia Minor*. The former, beginning with the Conquest, comes down to 1259, the year of his death. The latter is an abridgment of this, and is still extant in manuscript. It is now understood, however, that the *Historia Major* as far as 1235 is only an adaptation by Paris of the *Flores Historiarum* of Roger Wendover, a monk who preceded him in St. Albans.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, if not the most trustworthy, is at least the most noted of the chroniclers of this era. He was born at Monmouth about the commencement of the twelfth century, and educated for the Church. In 1152 he was consecrated Bishop of St. Asaphs, and he is supposed to have died in 1154. Geoffrey was an excellent scholar, had great literary ability, and possessed a powerful imagination. His *History of Britain*, which became the "grand magazine of the historical romancers," claims on that account the distinction of having created a new literary epoch throughout Europe. It is a pretended genealogy of the Kings of Britain from the time of the fabulous Brutus down to Cadwallader in 689. In reality, it is a series of the most romantic fictions, ingrafted upon historic traditions. The production has, therefore, been rejected as entirely fabulous, although it is maintained by Lappenberg and others that many of his accounts are supported by independent narratives. Be this as it may, we are indebted to Geoffrey's work for the origin of the wonderful adventures of King Arthur and his knights, which gave rise to the body of fictitious literature that overspread Europe during the Middle Ages. It was translated by Wace into Anglo-Norman, and afterwards by Layamon into Semi-Saxon.

Roger Bacon is the greatest name in this period. He is celebrated not only for his researches in physical science, but also for his mathematical and literary attainments. He was born in 1214 at Ilchester in Somersetshire, and died in 1292. He belonged to an ancient and respectable family, and was educated first at Oxford and afterwards at Paris. The astonishing discoveries he made, and the inductions he drew from them, so alarmed the ignorant,

that they ascribed them to the agency of magic. Through the persecutions of his enemies he was twice imprisoned, ten long years having been on the last occasion spent by him in confinement. His chief productions are the *Opus Majus; Opus Minus; Opus Tertium;* the *Epistle on the Secret Processes of Art and Nature, and the Nullity of Magic; The Mirror of Secrets;* and *The Mirror of Alchemy.* From these it has been proved that Bacon must have been acquainted with magnifying glasses, that he knew the composition and effects of gunpowder, and that he contemplated the possibility of steam-travelling both by land and water.

*Gesta Romanorum* is the name given to a miscellaneous collection of stories in great request during the Middle Ages. They profess to be founded on Roman history, but appear to be culled from a variety of sources, as we find amongst them legends, romances, fables, and parables, as well as historical adaptations. These tales constituted the favourite reading of the monks during the long winter nights, and were very attractive from the simple manner in which they were written. Latterly a moral was affixed to each of them, and advantage was taken of this to render them available for the pulpit. The authorship of this legendary work has been lately ascribed by Grässe to a monk named Elinandus, and believed to have been either an Englishman or a German. The *Gesta* has acquired additional interest from the fact that Chaucer, Shakspeare, Scott, and other poets have drawn upon its stores.

Our space permits us only to notice briefly such writers as GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS, who wrote the *Topography of Ireland* and the *Conquest of Ireland;* JOHN OF SALISBURY, an accomplished scholar, who exposed the vices of the age in his two principal works; JOSEPHUS ISCANUS, or JOSEPH OF EXETER, described by Warton as "a miracle in this age of classical composition;" WALTER MAPES, "the Anacreon of the twelfth century," who composed satirical poems directed against the corruptions of the clergy; ALEXANDER OF HALES, a great name in scholastic philosophy, author of the *Summa Universa Theologiæ*, which by command of Pope Alexander was to be the text-book used by all professors

and students of theology in Christendom; Robert Grosthead, a friend and patron of Bacon, and an English prelate of great versatility of talent, who is said to have written about two hundred books; and Michael Scott of Balwearie in Fifeshire, whose knowledge of the occult sciences procured him the reputation of a magician among his countrymen.

## II.—NORMAN-FRENCH, OR ANGLO-NORMAN.

While Latin was the vehicle of learning among the Churchmen and scholars of this period, Norman-French flourished as the language of the Court and the nobility. This language was a variety of the Romance tongue; a name applied to the dialects that sprang up in the countries conquered by the Romans. In France there were two varieties, one peculiar to the north and the other to the south. That of the south produced the Romance literature of the Troubadours, and that of the north the Romance literature of the Trouvères.

The poetry of the Troubadours, or the Provençal Romance, dates from the beginning of the eleventh century, and it attained its greatest splendour before the end of the twelfth. It consisted chiefly of lyrical effusions of love and gallantry, with songs of war and pastoral life. Reared in the balmy regions of the south, its rapid growth and decay have been compared to the brilliant but transient efflorescence of nature in these sunny climes. Even the courts of love, radiant with the smiles of beauty, in which the Troubadour competed for the prize of merit, failed to inspire his strains with manly and enduring vigour. They died out in the thirteenth century; not, however, without leaving traces of their influence on the literature of Italy.

The poetry of the Trouvères, or Norman minstrels, had its origin about the time of the Conquest, and was destined to become the foundation of the national literature of France. Its general character was graver than the ballad poetry of the Troubadours, and its style was chiefly narrative or epic. The light and gay romance of the south, as was to be expected, found its way to the

north; but it can hardly be said to have ever become popular there. The principal subjects of the northern romance were merry tales called Fabliaux, and stories of enterprise styled Chivalrous Romances. It also included satirical poems, religious rhymes, war songs, and metrical chronicles. The Fabliaux usually indulged in a comic and sometimes in a scandalous vein, and were occasionally employed to point the moral. The Chivalrous Romances were the true exponents of the romance poetry of the north, and for these we are much indebted to the Courts of England. The true romance dates from the middle of the twelfth century, the narratives written before this professing to be genuine historical records. From the middle of the twelfth to the end of the thirteenth century, we have a splendid outburst of fictitious narrative. The favourite subjects are Arthur and his knights, Charlemagne and his peers, Richard Cœur de Lion, Alexander the Great, and the Trojan War. In these, Fancy, wild and capricious, reigns supreme; at whose talismanic touch the barriers of geography and chronology are broken down, and Greek and Trojan, British and Armoric knights revel together in fairy land, or tilt in the lists of chivalry.

Of the various productions of the period many have been lost, and of those preserved some are without names.

Geoffrey Gaimar, who lived in the twelfth century, is the first author of any note. He is represented as having been attached to the household of a family of rank in Lincolnshire. His *History of the Anglo-Saxon Kings* is a poem of considerable length, founded chiefly on the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. It commences with the arrival of the Saxons, and reaches as far as the year 1100. Although containing a deal of useless matter, this chronicle is not without value to the historian.

Benoit, like Gaimar, flourished at the Court of Henry II. He wrote, by desire of the King, a metrical narrative of the Dukes of Normandy, which is still preserved. It is an interesting record of early Norman history.

Richard Wace was a native of Jersey, and lived also during the time of Henry II. He was the author of *Le Brut d'Angle-*

*terre* (*the Brut of England*); which is a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's work with some additions, and is so called from Brutus, the fabulous founder of the British monarchy. It was completed in the year 1155. Wace composed, besides, the *Roman de Rou*, (the *Romance of Rollo*), giving an account of the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest.

Marie of France was the authoress of twelve lays, called *The Lays of Brittany*. Little is known of her history, and it is uncertain whether she wrote them in this country or in France. In her preface she states that her stories were composed from memory, and that believing them to be new, she had ventured to place them before English readers. Most of them are founded upon Armoric traditions, although the scene of some is laid in England. Marie has dedicated her lays to the King, supposed to be Henry III. They are fine compositions and interesting specimens of the Fabliaux. One or two, however, have an air of romance about them.

## THE ARTHURIAN ROMANCES.

By the title *Arthurian Romances* we distinguish the numerous productions celebrating the exploits of Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The chief source of these, as we have seen, was Geoffrey's Chronicle. The real history of Arthur is involved in obscurity. By many he is considered to be a purely mythical personage. It is probable enough that he was one of the last of the British princes who resisted the encroachments of the Saxons, and it was quite natural that tradition should associate with his name the performance of heroic deeds.

According to legendary annalists he was the son of Uther Pendragon, King of the Britons. His birth is mysteriously interwoven with the prophecies of the magician Merlin, who foretold his greatness and the mighty achievements he should accomplish. Having succeeded to the throne, and having been invested by the Lady of the Lake with the enchanted sword Caliburno, he first subdues the rebellious kings who opposed his right to the crown. Turning next upon the Saxons, he engages them in several fierce

encounters, and finally defeats them in the sanguinary battle of Badon Hill, slaying four hundred and seventy of the heathens with his own good sword. The Scots and Picts are also overcome, and the land enjoys peace for a time; but the conquests of Arthur are not completed. Crossing to Ireland, the princes there submit, and do him homage. Norway is reduced, and the incursions of the northern pagans are avenged. Sailing thence to Gaul, he destroys the giant of St. Michael's Mount, overruns the country and returns to Cærleon on the Usk, where he holds high court, assembling round him knights and princes and tributary kings. His marriage with Guinevere, daughter of King Leodegrance of Camelgard, soon follows. The ceremony is performed with stateliest splendour, kings and queens, noble knights and ladies, forming part of the royal processions. On this august occasion was instituted the most noble Order of the Round Table, comprising the most renowned knights of Christendom. One by one they swore to be true and faithful to the lofty principles of chivalry—truth, valour, self-denial, courtesy and kindness; to be ever ready to succour the distressed; to yield themselves, above all, most devotedly to the service of ladies. But a new enterprise is before the King. A demand for tribute and the restoration of Gaul by Lucius Tiberius, Emperor of Rome, is met with haughty defiance. A war ensues in which Arthur is victorious, having slain the Emperor with his own hand in the great battle of Soissons, although protected by a body-guard of fifty giants. Marching through Flanders and Germany, he crosses the mountains to Italy, and enters Rome in triumph, where he is crowned Emperor by the Pope with due solemnity. He again returns home, and amidst the pomp of jousts, and tournaments, and minstrel songs, and royal hunts, rules the country in peace and prosperity. But the evil day comes at last. When absent in France, he receives tidings that his nephew Modred, whom he had left as guardian of the kingdom, had circulated a report of his death and proclaimed himself King. Hastening to England, he encounters his nephew and defeats him in several engagements. Driven into Cornwall, Sir Modred makes a last stand on the banks of the Camlan. In

the battle that ensues, Arthur receives his death-wound at the moment when his spear has pierced the body of the traitor. Being carried to the sea-side, he is transported in a barge by three fairy queens to the enchanted isle of Avalon in Somersetshire; whence, after reposing for a time, he will re-appear to avenge the fate of his country.

This legendary history is founded upon what are called the Welsh traditions of Arthur. The other genuine Arthurian romances sprang up in connection with the Knights of the Round Table. They are represented as going forth in quest of adventures, and returning to the annual celebration of the Feast of Pentecost, when they related their wonderful exploits in presence of Prince Arthur and the fair Guinevere. Many a tale was then told of ladies having been rescued from cruel tyrants; of the wrongs of the oppressed having been avenged; of giants slain and castles disenchanted, their dungeons opened, and the prisoners set free. It is in these legends that we must look for the ideal of chivalry; and while it is true that much immorality disfigures their pages, we shall find that truth, virtue, and valour were the objects of a reverence that gave earnest of better things to come.

Besides *Merlin* and *The Mort Arthus*, which thus celebrate the life and death of King Arthur, *The Sangreal*, and *The Quest of the Sangreal*, along with *Sir Lancelot* and *Sir Tristram*, form, according to Sir Thomas Mallory's collection, the other leading romances in the Arthurian cycle. The Sangreal, (the holy vessel or cup, which is strangely mixed up with the adventures of Arthur and his knights,) is the most important connecting link of the series. It contains the history of the holy cup from which the wine was drunk at the last supper of our Lord. Brought to this country by Joseph of Arimathea, and known for its healing virtue and other miraculous powers, it had vanished from the earth, having been withdrawn on account of the sins of men, and was only to be seen by a knight having "clean hands and a pure heart," and possessing valour and daring above all men. The time had at last come when this great object was to be attained. As Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table had assembled according to yearly

custom, the walls of the palace were suddenly shaken, and heralded by peals of thunder, the Sangreal, veiled in samite, was borne aloft upon a sunbeam through the hall, which was filled with incense and perfume. The "Quest" of the holy cup was decreed. Knight after knight rose and pledged himself to the enterprise until it was achieved. A hundred and fifty rode forth upon the high adventure; but all were doomed to disappointment save the good Sir Galahad, the knight of purity, truth, and courage, and the impersonation of chivalry. For him the vision of the sacred Graal was reserved, and with this his mission on earth was finished. His soul departed, and was carried to heaven by a multitude of angels.

But the moral of the Arthuriad may be carried farther. In these chivalrous legends the great prince himself is an erring mortal, and dire is the result of his transgression. From the unlawful court which was paid to Queen Belisent sprang in retribution the love of Lancelot and Guinevere, followed by the rebellion of that knight, and the breaking up of the Round Table, and leading in the end to the tragic death of Arthur himself, by the hand of his nephew Modred.

Mr. Wright, in the *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, determines the authorship of these compositions. The *Sangreal*, which is generally reckoned the first, is attributed to Robert Borron, or Bouron, who is said to have been employed by Henry II., along with his brother Helis, to write French prose versions of some of the romances of the Round Table. Walter Map, or Mapes, whose celebrity as a satirist has been already noticed, is considered to be the author of *Merlin*, *Lancelot*, *The Quest*, and *The Death of Arthur*. *Sir Tristram* is ascribed to Luke Gast of Salisbury.

Of anonymous productions, the most interesting are *Havelok the Dane*, *The Gest of King Horn*, *Alexander the Great*, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, *Sir Bevis of Hampton*, and *Sir Guy of Warwick*. These and many other French romances, including of course the Arthurian series, were afterwards translated into English, and produced no inconsiderable effect upon our language and literature. They helped to enrich the one, while they enlarged the

sphere of the other. Their influence has lived far beyond the days of chivalry. They have had charms for the poet in every age, quickening his imagination, and leading him to sing of love and beauty, bravery and moral worth.

## III.—SEMI-SAXON, OR SAXON-ENGLISH.

While the schoolmen and chroniclers of the Church were composing voluminous treatises in Latin, and the minstrels were in the baronial halls celebrating the charms and glories of chivalry in Norman-French, the native tongue, sadly overborne, but yet spoken by the great body of the people, was chiefly employed in the chronicles of the monks, and in translations from the historical and chivalrous legends of its courtly rival. Its literature is scant indeed, and possesses few original productions, neither scholars nor ecclesiastics being much inclined to cultivate a language that was banished from the precincts of the Court. There is, nevertheless, abundant material to prove that the national speech continued to preserve its vitality, however much it may have been neglected by literary men.

*The Saxon Chronicle* still existed, and formed the occupation of the monks during the first part of this period. It ceased to be written about the year 1154, or the close of the reign of Stephen. In the later portions we have the first intimation of that process of disintegration which the Anglo-Saxon tongue was destined to undergo before it appeared in the form of Modern English.

*The Brut* of Layamon is the earliest metrical work of any extent in the native tongue subsequent to the Conquest. It affords the best specimen of Semi-Saxon, the language in this its intermediate stage being fancifully compared by Campbell to the new insect stirring its wings before it has thrown off the aurelia state. Layamon was a priest, who dwelt at Ernely, on the banks of the Severn. His poem is a translation of Wace's Chronicle, with amplification to a very great extent, speeches, legends, and stories being freely introduced. It contains 32,250 lines, and was written about the year 1200. The entire composition was published by Sir Frederick

Madden in 1847, along with a glossary and valuable notes. In style it is simpler than Anglo-Saxon poetry, being less inverted, and not so metaphorical. The descriptions, however, have all the animation and vigour of the ancient dialect. The versification, too, is still alliterative, although there are occasionally rhyming couplets—a feature that indicated the commencement of the struggle between the old style and the new. Sir Frederick claims for his author the merit not merely of a translator, but an original writer.

*The Ormulum*, so called from its author, Orm, or Ormin, is a metrical paraphrase, written in a homiletic form, of those passages of the New Testament which were employed in the daily service of the Church. It is a production of great length, and is supposed to have been written about the year 1225. Its metre is neither rhymed nor alliterative, but a species of blank verse, with fifteen syllables to the line. These are, however, capable of division into two lines of eight and seven syllables respectively. *The Ormulum* is noted for the purity of its Saxon-English. Mr. Marsh, who has analyzed its vocabulary, has been unable to find a single word of Norman-French origin, and scarcely ten which are taken directly from the Latin. The style, too, he considers to be more English than Saxon; differing considerably in this respect from the text of Layamon: from which it has been inferred that the change from the inflected to the simple form of the language took place more rapidly in some districts than in others.

KING ARTHUR GOING FORTH TO BATTLE.

LAYAMON.[1]

| | |
|---|---|
| Tha dude he on his burne | Then don'd he his *burnie* [*breast-plate.* |
| Ibroide of stele; | Widespread with steel; |
| The makede on aluisc smith | An elvish smith it made |
| Mid athelen his crafte; | With his noble craft; |
| He wes ihaten Wygar, | He was *hight* Wygar, [*called.* |
| The witege wurhte. | The soothsaying smith. |
| His sconken he helede | His shanks he cover'd |
| Mid hosen of stele: | With hosen of steel: |

[1] Guest Eng., Rh., ii. 118, 119.

Calibeorne his sweord
He cwemde bi his side;
Hit wes iworht in Avalun,
Mid wigele-fulle crafteu.
Halm he set on hafde
Hæh of stele;
Ther on wes moni gim-ston
Al mid golde bi-gon;
He wes Uderes,
Thas athelen kinges;
He wes ihaten Goswhit,
Ælchen othere unlic.
He heng an his sweore
Ænne sceld deore;
His nome wes on Bruttisc
Thrid-wen ihaten;
Ther wes innen igrauen
Mid rede golde stanen
An on-licnes deore
Of Drihtenes moder.
His spere he nom an honde,
Tha Ron wes ihaten.
Tha he hafden al his iweden,
Tha leop he on his steden.
Tha he mihte bihalden,
Tha bihalues stoden,
Thene næireste cniht
The verde scolde leden
Ne isæh nævere na man
Selere cniht nenne,
Thenne him wes Arthur,
Athelest cunnes.

Caliburn his sword
He fitted by his side;
It was wrought in Avalon,
With arts of *grammarye.* [*sorcery.*
Helm he set on head
High-rais'd of steel;
Thereon was many a gem-stone
All with gold beset;
It was Uther's,
The noble king's;
It was hight Goswhit,
To every other unlike.
He hung on his neck
A precious shield;
Its name in British
Thridwen was hight;
Therein was graven
With red gold stones
A precious likeness
Of our Lord's mother
His spear he took in hand,
That Ron was hight.
When he had all his *weeds,* [*equipments.*
Then leapt he on his steed.
Then might they behold,
Who beside him stood,
The fairest knight
That host could lead,
And ne'er saw man
Better knight any,
Than was Arthur,
He of noblest kin.

## CHAPTER III.

### LANGUAGE AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Commencement of the change from the inflected to the simple form—Reasons assigned for it—Destruction of grammatical system—Illustrations—Extract.

THE Semi-Saxon period introduces us into that state of transition which began to mark the progress of the language from Anglo-Saxon into English. The picturesque variety of inflection that had hitherto characterized the Anglo-Saxon tongue was now broken up, its grammatical precision was invaded, and, like some stately edifice that has been neglected for a time, it fell into ruin. No satisfactory explanation of the causes producing the change from the inflected to the simple form of the language has yet been given; for although it became apparent after the Conquest, it appears to have been in progress for some time before that event. It has been suggested by some, that the written Anglo-Saxon with its diversity of inflection was the language of the learned, but that the common people must all along have spoken it in a form approaching in simplicity of structure to that which the language now presents. Others maintain, with more reason, that the written language having fallen into disuse, fell also into decay, the niceties of grammatical inflection being first neglected and afterwards lost. Be which it may, we find the language after the Conquest in its "aurelia" state of Semi-Saxon, struggling for existence against the innovation of the Norman-French, which was the language of the Court, of the nobility, and of the ecclesiastics who followed in their train. There were thus in England, besides the Latin, which was in use among all the European writers of that period, the two literatures of the Semi-Saxon and the Norman-French, the one addressed to the people, and the other to the aristocracy, and each preserving its individuality of character as strictly as the two ranks of society which they severally represented. It would seem to be a natural

consequence, that the tongue of the dominant race should have absorbed or impressed the badge of its superiority upon that of the conquered; but it is remarkable that no such result took place. In the *Brut* of Layamon, which was written a century and a half after the Conquest, there are not as many as fifty French words; and the text of the *Ormulum*, as we have seen, is equally free from foreign ingredient. So tenaciously, indeed, did the native tongue maintain its ground among the vulgar, that it was ultimately destined to triumph over its more fashionable opponent. About the year 1250 a reaction took place in its favour, which showed that it was gradually re-establishing itself as the basis of the English language. Of the nature of the changes which had in the meantime been effected upon it, and which resulted in the destruction of its grammatical system, the following illustrations are subjoined :—

*Article.*—In Semi-Saxon there is first an indistinctness in the declension of the article, the masculine and feminine *se* and *seo* becoming less frequent. Eventually the undeclined article in its modern form often supplies the place of the declined. Another new feature is the use of the article *a*.

*Noun.*—In the noun, inflection is disregarded, the cases are confounded, and some of them at last disappear. Gender, too, suffers, masculine and neuter forms being mixed up, and great irregularity in consequence resulting. As an example of the process of change, we find the plural ending *as* corrupted into *es*.

*Adjective.*—In the adjective, like the substantive, there is much confusion in gender, inflection, and declension. The distinction between the definite and indefinite adjective is gone, and many of the inflections disappear. Feminine terminations are dropped.

*Pronoun.*—The pronoun undergoes least change. There is a neglect of feminine terminations as in the adjective. We have a modern form, however, in *him*, which takes the place of the Anglo-Saxon *hine*.

*Verb.*—The conjugation of the verb is still Anglo-Saxon, but the changes are important. The preposition *to* is introduced before the infinitive, which itself experiences the commencement of a

series of modifications. In Anglo-Saxon the termination is *an* which now becomes *en;* it afterwards drops the *n*, and finally the *e*. As an example, *specan*, to speak, appears successively in the various stages as *specan*, *specen*, *spece*, *speak*. We have, besides, the use of weak preterites and participles instead of strong, and the constant occurrence of *en* for *on* in the plural.

*Preposition.*—In the preposition there is much uncertainty in the rule for government.

Besides referring to the extract from Layamon, we give a short prose passage from the last of the *Chronicles;* in both of which these changes and irregularities may be identified. The language will be perceived to be broken up not only as regards inflection, but syntax. It was, in reality, what it has been aptly termed, broken English, ungrammatical, indistinct, confused; with very little alteration, however, upon its vocabulary—which is more than can be said for the orthography, and we fear, for the pronunciation.

DEATH OF STEPHEN—1154.

On this yær wærd the King Stephen ded, and bebyried there his wif and his
In this year was the King Stephen dead and be-buried where his wife and his

sune wæron bebyried at Tauresfeld. That ministre hi makiden. Tha the
son were be-buried at Tauresfield. That minster they founded. When the

King was ded, tha was the eorl beionde sæ and ne durste nan man don other
King was dead, then was the earl beyond sea and not durst no man do other

bute god for the micel eie of him. Tha he to Englelande come, tha was
but good for the much awe of him. When he to England came, then was

underfangen mid micel wortscipe and to King bletcad in Lundine on the
received with much worthship and to King blessed in London on the

Sunnendæi beforen mid-winter-dæi, and ther held he micel curt.
Sunday before midwinter, and there held he full court.

# EARLY ENGLISH.

(1250–1362.)

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

Historical summary—Union of Norman and Saxon—Progress of learning—Growing importance of English—The scholastic philosophy—General remarks.

Down to the reign of John, the haughty Normans had gloried in their distinction as foreigners; and we are told by Macaulay that their ordinary form of indignant denial was, "Do you take me for an Englishman?" The indiscriminate tyranny of that monarch, however, who oppressed both baron and churl, at one time starving the wives and families of the former to death, and at another burning the villages of the latter that had afforded himself and his retinue shelter, was the first signal for the cohesion of the races—a cohesion which was formally confirmed by the Great Charter. The amalgamation thus inaugurated was rapidly developed by subsequent events. The loss of the patrimonial territory in Normandy and other parts of France at length taught the Norman princes to regard England as their home, and the English as their countrymen. The memorable Parliament of Leicester, and the political transactions in the reign of Henry III., drew still closer the bond between the two races, and finally in the French wars of the Third Edward, the national identity was completed by their united triumphs on the proud fields of Cressy and Poictiers.

These social and political events acquire greater significance when regarded in connection with the aspect which the language

and literature of the country now presented. Crushed, as we have seen, during the severe domination of the Norman princes, but steadily regaining its former position, the national speech now begins to assert its supremacy, and is recognised before the end of the period as the medium of discourse and letters. When viewed especially with reference to its extensive adoption of French words, we see the effects of the fusion of the two races that had been so long antagonistic. For the general purposes of literature, Latin was still in the ascendant; but during the whole of this era there was a gradual decline from elegance and even correctness of style. Polite learning had to succumb to the abstract speculations of the scholastic philosophy, which monopolized the time of Churchmen and scholars. This philosophy was founded on the precepts of Aristotle, and consisted in the application of the Aristotelian logic and metaphysics first to theology, and finally to every department of knowledge. Its perversion of the science of dialectics, as well as the sophistry and frivolous subtlety of disputation which it encouraged, have subjected the philosophy of the schoolmen to much raillery and sarcasm. It may be said to have culminated in England about the year 1300, and with all its waste of ingenuity was not without beneficial results. Although study thus proceeded very much in one channel, the mental activity of the age was also manifested in other directions. Oxford had never been so full of students, and the endowment of the colleges must have given an impetus to learning. Classics, indeed, were neglected; but considerable advance was made in mathematics and physical science, while law and medicine were cultivated with much success. The growth of national literature was, under the circumstances, necessarily slow. Much, however, was due to the influence of the romantic poetry.

## CHAPTER II.

### AUTHORS AND WORKS.

I. Latin:—Decline of classic literature—Latin authors—Duns Scotus—William Occam. II. Early English:—Early English Metrical Romances—Rhyming Chronicles and other productions—Robert of Gloucester—Robert Mannying or De Brunne—Lawrence Minot—"Piers Plowman."

#### I.—LATIN.

"The Latin writers of the thirteenth century," says Hallam, "display an incredible ignorance, not only of pure idiom, but of the common grammatical rules. Those who attempted to write verse have lost all prosody, and relapse into leonine rhymes and barbarous acrostics. The historians use a hybrid jargon intermixed with modern words. The scholastic philosophers wholly neglected their style, and thought it no wrong to enrich the Latin, as in some degree a living language, with terms that seemed to express their meaning. Duns Scotus and his disciples in the next century carried this much further, and introduced a most barbarous and unintelligible terminology, by which the school metaphysics were rendered ridiculous in the revival of literature. Even the jurists, who more required an accurate knowledge of the language, were hardly less barbarous." Thus classical literature declined in England, as well as in other countries. It is not surprising, therefore, that before the end of this period Latin began to give place to French; which, in its turn, was soon to be supplanted by the native English. Of Latin authors we have a few prominent names:—

Duns Scotus flourished during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He studied at Oxford, where he was distinguished for his learning and ability. Having been appointed professor of divinity, he drew crowds of students from all quarters to the university. From Oxford he removed to Paris, and became president of the theological school. In 1308 he was sent to Cologne,

where he died soon after. Scotus is reckoned amongst the greatest of the scholastic philosophers. One of his chief tenets was the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. His great opponent on this and other subjects was Thomas Aquinas. The Scotists and Thomists disputed keenly for many years, and the bitterness with which they opposed each other was increased by the jealousy of the rival orders to which they belonged, Scotus being a Franciscan and Aquinas a Dominican. The dialectic skill of Duns Scotus procured him the title of the Subtle Doctor, which in these days of metaphysical refinement does not suggest much that is either practical or useful. His works, however, prove him to have been a profound thinker.

William Occam, so named from the village of Occam in Surrey, was the disciple of Scotus, but his opponent in philosophy, Scotus being a realist, and Occam a nominalist. The realists held that ideas or general terms are expressive of real existences—that they have some kind of reality independent of the language by which they are indicated. The nominalists objected to this doctrine, and maintained that all general notions or terms are mere words or names—that they have no reality whatever—that all entities or existences are particular. This was the great controversy of scholasticism. It began in the twelfth century, lulled in the thirteenth, and was revived with greater spirit than ever by Occam in the fourteenth. The debate spread through the universities of England, France, and Germany, and being mixed up with theology, like all other discussions of the Middle Ages, was carried on with bitter animosity and violence in these countries, the partisanship of crowned heads being enlisted in the dispute. Occam, the Invincible, as he was called, was one of the last and greatest of the scholastic doctors, and his philosophy still affords matter for discussion to metaphysical inquirers. He died at Munich in 1347.

Higden and Hemmingford are the two chroniclers of any note in this period. Higden's chief production was the *Polychronicon*, which begins at the Creation and comes down to the year 1357. It was afterwards translated into English by John de Trevisa.

The chronicle of Hemmingford is a narrative of English history from the Conquest to the death of Edward I.

## II.—EARLY ENGLISH.

The last notes of the Troubadour's lay had died out, but the songs of the Norman Trouvère and the English minstrel were yet to be heard. In courts and castles these were still welcome guests, where, in the winter nights, they beguiled the long hours with many a tale of chivalry and romance. But the minstrel, too, was soon to find his occupation gone. After 1300 Anglo-Norman Romance began to decline, its place being gradually usurped by similar compositions in English. The Early English Metrical Romances, as these are called, are generally admitted to be translations of French originals or of incidents connected with them. The earliest date from the latter half of the thirteenth century. *Sir Tristram* comes first, followed by *Havelok the Dane*, *King Horn*, *Cœur de Lion*, and *King Alisaunder*. In the fourteenth century, when English minstrelsy reached its height, there was quite an inundation of this romantic poetry, comprehending translations of the Arthurian cycle, and a host of other romances. English had thus attained consideration during this period. The declension of the barons and the rising importance of the commons had almost acquired for it the rank of the national speech. Its literature, however, does not yet boast of much extent or great originality. Besides the metrical romances, it contains ballads, metrical lives of the saints, and a continuation of the narrative poetry which has been distinguished by the name of the Rhyming Chronicles. Of the latter we may notice those of Robert of Gloucester and Robert Mannying or De Brunne. To Early English are usually ascribed the poem of *The Owl and the Nightingale*, and the curious satire called *The Land of Cockayne;* and we may also with propriety include within the limits of the same period the warlike songs of Lawrence Minot and *The Vision of Piers Plowman*. In some of these remains may be traced occasional streaks and flushings of the poetical aurora; and the metrical

romances, irrespective altogether of their character as literary compositions, acquire importance from the consideration "that they preserve pure and unmixed those fables of chivalry which formed the taste and awakened the imagination of our older English classics." It will be observed that Early English furnishes no example of prose writing.

Robert of Gloucester was a monk of the abbey of that city, and lived in the reign of Edward I. His chronicle is a metrical *History of England* from the fabulous Brutus to the reign of Edward. The mention he makes of the canonization of St. Louis shows that it must have been written subsequent to 1297, when that event took place. The production is little more than a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth and William of Malmesbury. Its chief value consists in affording an example of Early English; which, however, is tinged with the western dialect. The verse contains fourteen syllables, capable of division into two lines of eight and six. The chronicle, according to Sir F. Madden, has been printed from incorrect manuscripts.

Robert Mannying, or Robert De Brunne, so called from Brunne in Lincolnshire where he was born, was the author of another rhyming chronicle in two parts. The first extends from Æneas to the death of Cadwallader, and follows Wace; the second continues the narrative to the reign of Edward I., and is taken from a French metrical history by Peter Langtoft. The work was completed in 1338.

"Lawrence Minot," according to Hallam, "is perhaps the first original poet in our language that has survived." He lived in the reign of Edward III., and wrote a series of poems celebrating the victories of that monarch. They commence with Halidon Hill (1333) and end with the taking of Guisnes Castle (1352).

### PIERS PLOWMAN.

*The Vision of Piers Plowman* is generally stated to have been written about the year 1362, by one Robert Langland, a secular priest, and a fellow of Oriel College in Oxford. The author's

first name, however, is now believed to have been William; so that the title of the book ought more correctly to be *The Visions of William concerning Piers Plowman.* Couched under a series of visions, in which are allegorized the virtues, the vices, and other abstract qualities, it seems thus far to anticipate the plan and scope of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress;* but it is also keenly satirical, and vehemently denounces the voluptuousness, hypocrisy, and general corruption of the clergy. The metaphorical style of the narrative is exemplified in the allegory of Dowell, Dobet, and Dobest; in which Anima, the Soul, is placed by Kind or Nature in a castle called Caro (the Flesh), carefully guarded by Sir Dowell, whose daughter Dobet is the damsel attendant on Anima, Dobest being her bishop preceptor; Sir Inwit, the constable of the castle; and his five sons, Sir Seewell, Sir Saywell, Sir Hearwell, Sir Workwell, and Sir Gowell. Amongst the most powerfully drawn figures are Covetousness and Envy; and one passage, where Nature, or Kind, sends forth diseases at the command of Conscience, is admitted to be conceived with sublimity.

But the form of the poem is one of the most striking of its characteristics. "Instead of availing himself of the rising and rapid improvements of the English language, Langland prefers to adopt the style of the Anglo-Saxon poets. Nor did he make these writers the model of his language only; he likewise imitates their alliterative versification." His example resuscitated for a time the old form of metre, the most famous imitation of his style being the piece called *Piers Plowman's Creed,* a satire of the same description as the *Vision,* to which it is generally appended.

ENVY.

Envy with heavy heart
Asked after *shrift,* [*confession.*
And carefully *mea culpa* [*my fault.*
He *comsed* to shew. [*began.*
He was as pale as a pelet,
In the palsy he seemed;
And clothed in a kaurymaury,
I *couth* it not *discrive,* [*could...describe.*

In kirtle and *courtepy*, [*short cloak.*
And a knife by his side;
Of a *freres* frock [*friar's.*
Were the fore-sleeves;
And as a leek that had *y-lay* [*lain.*
Long in the sun
So looked he with lean cheeks
Lowering foul.
His body was *to-bollen* for wrath [*swo'len.*
That he *boot* his lippes; [*bit.*
And wringing he went with the *fust* [*fist.*
To wreak himself he thought
With *werks* or with words, [*works.*
When he *seigh* his time. [*saw.*
Each a word that he *warp* [*uttered.*
Was of a *neddres* tongue; [*adder's.*
Of chiding and of challenging
Was his chief *liflode*, [*way of life.*
With backbiting and *bismere*, [*infamy.*
And bering of false witness.

## CHAPTER III.

### LANGUAGE AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Relative position of the three tongues—Final ascendency of English—Condition of the language in its Early English stage.

THE relative position of the three tongues that had been employed in England since the Norman Conquest was very much reversed in the course of this period. Latin had hitherto been the language of literature, education, correspondence, charters, and statutes. In most of these respects it now yielded to French. The first French statute is found inserted amongst others in Latin shortly after 1250, and up to the reign of Henry VII. the laws were usually composed in that dialect. From 1300 we may date the use of French as the medium of correspondence, and we are told that the pupils of grammar schools were then taught to construe their Latin into French. All important documents, parliamentary and judicial proceedings, were recorded in French as frequently as in Latin; and classic literature, as we have seen, experienced a formidable rival in the French chivalrous romances. But French was supplanted by English as suddenly as it had superseded Latin. Many circumstances show that a knowledge of English had extended to the higher classes early in the fourteenth century, and that it was spoken by all ranks before the close of this era. In 1341 the statutes appear with English titles; about the same time scholars began to read Latin into English; and finally, in 1362, it was enacted that all pleas were henceforth to be pleaded and judged in English, on account of French being so much unknown.

The condition of the language in its Early English stage is very different from what it was in the Semi-Saxon. Having nearly divested itself of inflection, it appears in a simpler, though still a very irregular form. Its character is more English than Saxon, the arrangement being less inverted, and the place of inflection

being supplied by auxiliary particles. The entire work of reconstruction, however, in regard to orthography and grammar, remained to be performed. Of that, little was accomplished in this period, it being impossible to lay down rules at once, where everything was so incongruous and uncertain. The few grammatical changes are as follow:—In nouns the vowel-endings a, e, u, are all represented by *e;* and the relations of substantives to other words are expressed by prepositions. The adjective is almost reduced to an indeclinable word, and the pronoun has lost its dual form. There is less inflectional change in the verb than in the substantive; strong preterites still give place to weak; the infinitive *n* disappears, and final *e* occasionally becomes silent; participles, formerly declined like adjectives, and ending in *ande, ende,* are sometimes changed into *ing.* The accession of French words to the vocabulary has already been noticed. We give a short extract from Robert of Gloucester, which may be read with the aid of a glossary.

THE SPORTS AT ARTHUR'S CORONATION.

Sone after thys noble mete,[1] as rygt was of such tyde,[2]
The knygts atyled [3] hem aboute in eche syde.
In feldes and in medys to preue her bachelerye.[4]
Somme with lance, some with suerd, with oute vylenye,
Wyth pleyynge at tables, other atte chekere,[5]
Wyth castynge,[6] other wyth ssetynge,[7] other in some ogyrt manere.
And wuch so [8] of eny game adde [9] the maystrye,
The king hem of ys gyfteth [10] dyde large corteysye.
Upe the alurs [11] of the castles the laydes thanne stode,
And byhulde thys noble game, and wyche knygts were god.
All the thre hexte dawes [12] ylaste thys nobleye
In halles and in veldes, of mete and eke of pleye.
Thys men come the verthe [13] day byuore [14] the king there,
And he gef hem large gyftys, euere [15] as hii werthe were.

[1] Feast.
[2] As was right on such an occasion.
[3] Accoutred themselves.
[4] To prove their knighthood.
[5] Or at chess.
[6] Casting or throwing the stone.
[7] Shooting with the bow or spear.
[8] Who so.
[9] Had.
[10] Of his gifts.
[11] The walks within the battlements of the castle.
[12] The three high days.
[13] Fourth.
[14] Before.
[15] Every one or all.

# MIDDLE ENGLISH.

(1362–1558.)

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

Birth of English poetry—First English prose—Chilling effects of political events upon literature—The revival of letters—Progress of learning.

The period upon which we now enter is distinguished by the birth of English poetry in the writings of Chaucer, and is also remarkable as furnishing the first specimens of English prose; it includes, besides, a poetical era of uncommon brilliance in Scotland. It is remarkable, however, that after the death of Chaucer the spirit of poetry in England slumbered for more than a century, while literature in general experienced an almost total eclipse. In accounting for such a result by the influence of external events, it has been suggested that the national mind had become chilled and depressed by the commencement of religious persecution—that of the Wycliffites by the Lancastrian dynasty; and whatever weight may be attributed to this hypothesis, it is evident that the distractions and anxieties of such a strife as the Wars of the Roses must have left men little of either leisure or inclination for literary culture. The same century that witnessed these civil discords and their consequences is memorable in the history of modern civilisation for the Revival of Letters that followed the fall of Constantinople in 1453; and before its close, Caxton introduced into England the Art of Printing, whose progress was to become identical with the development of every department of thought, and whose fortunate coincidence with the Reformation was a pre-

paration for the rich intellectual harvest that marks the next period as the most brilliant in our literature.

The progress of learning throughout this long and chequered era may be briefly described. In the last half of the fourteenth century classics were almost neglected for the scholastic subtleties. About the same time the celebrated William of Wykeham founded the School of Winchester, along with the New College at Oxford, for which the former was intended as a nursery. Both institutions still remain magnificent monuments of the founder's generosity and public spirit. In the fifteenth century Oxford declined, and Latin was never at so low an ebb. Very few works of any kind were written, and knowledge in general made little or no advance. In 1452, Henry VI., in imitation of William of Wykeham, established Eton School, and in connection with it, King's College, Cambridge. The teaching in the grammar schools, however, is described as being very indifferent, and we are told that many of them were abandoned in the course of the century.

### REVIVAL OF LETTERS.

William Grocyn is hailed as the reviver of literature in England. He was educated at Winchester School, and the New College, Oxford. Being enthusiastically devoted to the study of Greek, he proceeded to Italy in 1488, where he remained three years prosecuting his favourite pursuit. In 1491 he returned to England, and began to teach at Exeter College, Oxford. He was encouraged in his attempts by the learned Erasmus, who came to England at this time, and who is supposed to have benefited by the prelections of Grocyn in the ancient tongue. Grocyn soon had a few emulators. Dr. Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, began to read Greek at Magdalene College in 1498. He was also the founder of St. Paul's School in London, to which the famous Lilly was appointed the first master in 1512. Lilly's well-known grammar received contributions from Colet and Erasmus. Among his pupils was Leland, the indefatigable antiquarian, a man of great talent and learning. One of the most accomplished scholars of the day, and one who rivalled Grocyn in

his efforts to introduce classical learning into England, was Thomas Linacre, the eminent physician and founder of the College of Physicians. He taught both Greek and Latin, and translated several treatises of Galen into elegant Latin. Sir Thomas More received instruction from him in Greek as well as from Grocyn, and proved himself an able classic. His celebrated work, the *Utopia*, was written in Latin. In 1519 Grocyn died. The same year, Richard Croke, on his return from the Continent, was appointed teacher of Greek at Cambridge by Chancellor Fisher, who entered enthusiastically into the educational reforms of the time. In 1516, besides the free schools of Taunton and Grantham, Fox, Bishop of Exeter, founded and endowed Corpus Christi College at Oxford with a Greek lectureship. But we must not forget Wolsey and his munificent patronage of learning. Oxford was indebted to him for the famous College of Christ Church, and Ipswich for its School, which soon rivalled Eton. We may also notice the address which he published to schoolmasters, urging upon them the necessity of instructing their youth in elegant lecture. This admonition acquires greater importance when we learn that a large number of schools were built and endowed at the commencement of the sixteenth century. The taste for classical learning was greatly indebted at this time to Sir Thomas Smith and Sir John Cheke, who had been fellow-students at Cambridge, and who were zealously devoted to the classical tongues, particularly Greek. Smith, who became professor in 1533, was succeeded by Cheke about 1540. Roger Ascham, the preceptor of Queen Elizabeth, and an eminent teacher of the classics, is our last name in connection with the Revival of Letters.

# CHAPTER II.

## AUTHORS AND WORKS.

1. Poets:—Introduction—Chaucer—Gower—Lydgate—Surrey—Wyatt—Sackville—Skelton—Scotch poets: Barbour—James I.—William Dunbar—Gawain Douglas—Sir David Lyndsay—Andrew Winton—Henry the Minstrel—Robert Henryson. II. Prose Writers:—Mandeville, Wycliff, Chaucer—Pecock, Fortescue, Caxton—Sir Thomas Mallory—The Paston Letters—More, Elyot, Ascham—Versions of the Scriptures—Theological and Controversial Writers—Chroniclers.

### I.—POETS.

The poetry of this period is partly of French origin in its first, but more decidedly Italian in its latest stage. In the thirteenth century there had appeared in France the allegorical poem of the *Roman de la Rose* (*The Romance of the Rose*), a work which attained to great popularity in the country of its birth, and which exercised an extensive influence upon the literature both of France and England. One of the earliest essays of Chaucer's muse was the production of an English version, which surpasses the original in poetical colouring and vigour of imagination; and in which, as in *The Flower and the Leaf*, metaphorical narrative is blended with an enthusiastic spirit of gallantry, and enlivened by the most charmingly fresh and naïve descriptions of nature. *The Golden Targe* of the Scottish poet Dunbar, and *The Palace of Honour* of his countryman Douglas, attest their familiarity with French models; but, like Chaucer, Dunbar, when drawing from the resources of his native genius, left these models far behind.

The influence produced upon our poetry by the master minds that created and brought Italian literature to perfection was elevating and progressive. Lydgate, Chaucer's contemporary, had translated Boccaccio's *Fall of Princes*, the plan of which was adopted by the writers of the collection called *The Mirrour for Magistrates*. In Sackville's contributions to that work there is a strength of painting that partakes of the grandeur as

well as of the gloom of Dante; and it was from the sonnets of Petrarch that Surrey, upon whom Warton has bestowed the praise of the first English classic, drew that inspiration to which the native lyre first vibrated in the refined strains of tenderness and passion. The genius of Sackville, that sheds a solitary lustre upon the reign of Mary, heralds that cluster of living sapphires among whom Spenser and Shakspeare rode brightest.

### GEOFFREY CHAUCER—1328-1400.

Geoffrey Chaucer, supposed to have been born in London in the year 1328, was educated at Oxford and Cambridge, and studied law at the Inner Temple. By his marriage with Philippa, sister of Catherine Swinford, who became wife of John of Gaunt, Chaucer obtained the influence of the Lancastrian family, was often employed in important public business, and was rewarded by Edward III. with various pensions, which he enjoyed until he became embroiled in the troubles of the subsequent reign. He accompanied Edward III. to France on his invasion of that country in 1359, and was made prisoner by the French; but it is not known how long he remained their captive. In 1373 he went on an embassy to Genoa; and from the manner in which he makes mention of Petrarch in the introduction to one of his tales, it is supposed that on that occasion he saw and conversed with his Italian contemporary and brother poet. During the reign of Richard II. he is supposed to have fallen into royal disfavour on account of his connection with John of Gaunt; but discredit has of late been thrown upon the tradition of his having been compelled to flee to the Continent; of his having been imprisoned in the Tower on his return; and of having purchased his release by making disclosures which implicated some of his associates. It is believed that for ten years preceding the deposition of Richard by Bolingbroke, he was for the most part in straitened circumstances, but in 1399 the amount of his former pension was doubled by the son of his patron John of Gaunt. During the period just mentioned he is believed to have composed portions of his *Canterbury Tales*, chiefly in his retirement at Woodstock, where

he resided in a house that had been conferred upon him by the King. He died at London in 1400, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

It must be admitted that the specimens of literature bequeathed to us from the previous periods are less interesting on account of their intrinsic merits than because they form an essential element in the history of the language and of the progressive development of the national intellect. In the Anglo-Saxon poetry, the use of alliteration as the chief ornamental artifice, and the employment of frequent repetition to express vehemence and intensity of emotion, denote a stage of æsthetical perception which may be likened to that exhibited in Indian mythology, where power or majesty is symbolized by a multiplicity of heads and arms. The best remains of Early English never advanced beyond barbarism; and without denying to Langland the merit of vigour and originality of conception, his verses not merely exhibit no symptoms of the grace and harmony that would denote advancing refinement, but actually restore the crude structure of the Semi-Saxon. By one step the writings of Chaucer carry us into a new era, in which the language appears endowed with ease, dignity, and copiousness of expression, and clothed with the rich hues of imagination. The shadowy delineations of the old romantic and allegorical schools are replaced by portraits instinct with dramatic individuality, and satire is for the first time seasoned with pungent and lively humour.

The characteristic excellences of the Father of English Poetry are thus succinctly portrayed by Warton in a recapitulatory chapter:—"Enough has been said to prove that in elevation and elegance, in harmony and perspicuity of versification, he surpasses his predecessors in an infinite proportion; that his genius was universal and adapted to themes of unbounded variety; that his merit was not less in painting familiar manners with humour and propriety, than in moving the passions and in representing the beautiful or the grand objects of nature with grace and sublimity. In a word, that he appeared with all the lustre and dignity of a true poet in an age which compelled him to struggle

with a barbarous language and a national want of taste, and when to write verses at all was regarded as a singular qualification." It has been already observed that his first models were the French poets. Similar in plan and spirit to the allegorical poem of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, are *The Dream*, and *The Flower and the Leaf*. *The House of Fame*, better known in the modernized version of Pope, is also in the allegorical form; but it is in *The Canterbury Tales* that we see displayed the full maturity and originality of Chaucer's genius.

Chaucer was master of the learning and science of his time. His versification has been discussed in volumes of controversy. The greater portion of his principal work is written in the heroic measure, which he was thus the first to introduce into the language; and the rule laid down by Hazlitt for reading it, to pronounce the final *e*, (when the metre requires it,) as in reading Italian, is at once simple and sufficient.

*The Canterbury Tales* furnish at once the greatest variety and the best specimens of Chaucer's style. The reader of English history needs scarcely be reminded that after the murder of Thomas à Becket, his "canonized bones" became such an object of veneration that his shrine was visited by devotees from all parts of the country. In the prologue to these Tales we are introduced to a numerous party (the poet feigning himself to be amongst the number) assembled at the Tabard Inn, Southwark, for the purpose of performing the pilgrimage to Canterbury; and, in order to beguile the tedium of the journey, it is proposed that each of the company shall tell a certain number of tales. As almost every rank of society is represented in the group, the author's individual descriptions of the pilgrims afford an interesting picture of the manners, social distinctions, and costumes of the period.

THE KNIGHT.

A knight there was, and that a worthy man,
That from the timé that he first began
To riden out he lovéd chivalry,
Truth and honour, *freedom* and courtesy. [*frankness.*

Full worthy was he in his lordés *werre*,[1] [*war.*
And thereto had he ridden, no man *ferre*, [*further.*
As well in Christendom as in heathenesse,
And ever honoured for his worthiness.
At *Alisandre* he was when it was won. [*Alexandria.*
Full ofté time he had the board begon[2]
Aboven allé nations in Prusse.—
At mortal *batailles* had he been fifteen, [*battles.*
And foughten for our faith at Tramassene[3]
In listes[4] thrïes, and ayc slain his foe.
This *ilké* worthy knight had been also [*same.*
Sometimé with the lord of *Palatye* [*Palathia.*
*Ageyn* another heathen in Turkey; [*against.*
And evermore he had a sovereign *prys*. [*prize.*
And though that he was *worthy*, he was *wys*, [*brave...wise.*
And of his port as meek as is a maid.
He never yet no *villany* ne[5] said [*indecency.*
In all his life, unto no manner *wight*. [*person.*
He was a very perfect *gentle* knight. [*high-born.*

## THE SQUIRE.

With him there was his soné, a young squire,
A lover and a lusty bachelor,
With lockés *crulle* as they were laid in press. [*curled.*
Of twenty year of age he was, I guess.
Of his statúre he was of even length,
And wonderly *deliver* and great of strength. [*nimble.*
And he had been sometime in chevachie[6]
In Flandres, in Artois, and in Picardie,
And borne him well, as in so little space,
In hope to stonden in his lady's grace.
Embroidered was he, as it were a mead
All full of freshé flowers, white and red.
Singing he was, or fluting, all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his gown, with sleevés long and wide.
Well could he sit on horse, and *fairé* ride. [*gracefully.*
He couldé songés well make and indite,
Joust and eke dance, and well portray and write.

[1] By the tenure of feudalism each baron was bound to bring into the field a certain number of knights, the latter being also required to furnish their quota of yeomen and men-at-arms.

[2] Placed in the seat of honour at table, when among the knights of the Teutonic order, who conquered Prussia from its heathen possessors, the Borussi.

[3] A Moorish kingdom in Africa.

[4] The enclosed ground in which tilts were run, and combats fought.

[5] *Ne* was used with *never*, like the double negative in French.

[6] Military service, from *Cheval* (Fr.), a horse.

So hot he lovéd, that by *nightertale* [*night-time.*
He slept no more than doth a nightingale.
Courteous he was, lowly and serviceable,
And carved before his father at the table.

THE YEOMAN.

A yeoman had he, and servants no *mo,* [*more.*
At that timé, for him *lust* riden so; [*it pleased.*
And he was clad in coat and hood of green.
A sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen
Under his belt he bare full thriftily.
Well could he dress his tackle yeomanly;
His arrows droppéd not with feathers low,[1]
And in his hand he bare a mighty bow.
A not-head[2] had he with a brown visage;
Of wood-craft *cowde*[3] he well all the usage. [*knew.*
Upon his arme he bare a gay bracer,[4]
And by his side a swerd and a buckler,
And on that other side a gay daggere,
Harnessed well, and sharp as point of spear.

A luxurious monk, the original of the Prior of Jorvaulx in *Ivanhoe*, is boldly and originally drawn:—

THE MONK.

A monk there was, a fair for the maistrie,[5]
An outrider, that lovéd *venerye;* [*hunting.*
A manly man to be an abbot able.
Full many a dainty horse had he in stable;
And when he rode, men did his bridle[6] hear
Gingeling in a whistling wind so clear,
And eke as loud as doth the chapel bell.
*There as* this lord was keeper of the cell,[7] [*where.*
The rule of Saint Maure or of Saint *Benét,* [*Benedict.*
Because that it was old and *somedeal* strait, [*somewhat.*

[1] It was a sign of the yeoman's carefulness in his business that the feathers stuck out from the shaft instead of drooping.—*Bell.*

[2] The meaning of this word is not agreed upon. Some make it *nut-head*, others *a head clipped close.*

[3] Past tense of *cunnan* (A.S.) to know, to be able.

[4] Armour for the arm; (Fr. *bras*, the arm.)

[5] *Fair for the maistrie*, so good as to excel all others.

[6] It was then the custom to ornament the bridle with bells.

[7] Monastery or other religious house.

This ilké monk let oldé thingés pace,[1]
And held after the newé world the space.[2]
He gave not of that text a pulled hen,
That saith that hunters be not holy men;
Nor that a monk when he is cloisterless
Is like to a fish that is waterless;
This is to say a monk out of his cloistre;
But *thilké* text held he not worth an oystre. [*this.*
I saw his sleevés *purfled* at the hand [*embroidered.*
With *gris*, and that the finest of a land. [*gray fur.*
And for to fasten his hood under his chin
He had of gold y-wrought a curious pin;
A love-knot in the greater end there was.
His head was balled and shone as any glass,
And eke his face as he had been anoint.
He was a lord full fat and in good point.[3]
His eyen steep and rolling in his heed,
That steaméd as a furnace of a leed;
His boots supple, his horse in great estate.
Now certainly he was a fair prelate.
He was not pale as a *forpyned* ghost; [*wasted.*
A fat swan loved he best of any roast.

## THE FRANKLIN OR LANDHOLDER.

A Frankelein was in this company,
White was his beard as is the dayésie.[4]
Of his complexioún he was sanguine;
Well loved he in the morn a sop of wine;
To livé in delight was all his *won*, [*wont.*
For he was Epicurus' owen son,
That held opinión that *pleyn* delight [*full.*
Was verily felicity perfýt.
An housèholder, and that great was he;
St. Julian he was in his countré:[5]
His bread, his ale, was always after one;[6]
A better envined[7] man was nowhere none.
Withouté bake meat was nevér his house,
Of flesh and fish, and that so plenteoús,
It snewéd in his house of meat and drink,
Of allé dainties that men couldé think.

[1] Pass by, omitted their observance.

[2] Followed the footsteps or fashion of the new world. The rigidity of the monastic orders had given way to luxury.

[3] *Embonpoint*, (Fr.) corpulent.

[4] *Day's eye* is the etymology of *daisy.*

[5] Such was his hospitality. St. Julian was the patron saint of travellers.

[6] *After* in the sense of *according to.* *After one*, of one or the same kind, equally good.

[7] Supplied with wine.

*After* the sundry seasons of the year [*according to.*
He changed them at meat and at souper.
Full many a fat partridge had he in mew,
And many a bream, and many a *luce* in stew. [*pike.*
Wo was his cook, *but if* his saucé were [*unless.*
Poignant and sharp, and ready all his gear.[1]
His table *dormant* in his hall alway [*fixed.*
Stood ready covered all the longé day.
At sessións there was he lord and sire,
Full often time he was knight of the shire.
An *anlas* and a *gipser* all of silk [*knife...purse.*
Hung at his girdle white as morning milk.
A sheriff had he been, and a countour;[2]
Was nowhere such a worthy vavasour.[3]

The concluding verses of the following can scarcely fail to suggest Tetzel with his indulgences :—

THE PARDONER.

This pardoner had hair as yellow as wax,
But smooth it hung as doth a *strike* of flax; [*hank.*
By ounces hung his lockés that he had,
And therewith he his shoulders overspread.....
Dishevel, save his cap, he rode all bare;
Such glaring eyen had he as an hare;
A vernicle[4] had he sewed on his cap;
His wallet lay before him in his lap,
*Bret* full of pardons come from Rome all hot. [*brimfull.*
A voice he had as small as any goat;
Ne was there such another pardoner,
For in his *malle* he had a *pilwebeer*, [*trunk...pillow-case.*
Which that[5] he saidé was our Lady's veil.
He said he had a gobbet of the sail
That Saint Peter haddé when that he went
Upon the sea till Jesus Christ him *hent*; [*took hold of.*
He had a cross of latoun[6] full of stones,
And in a glass he haddé piggés bones.

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

The *Knight's Tale*, esteemed by critics as the model of chival-

[1] All the requisite appurtenances of the table.
[2] Meaning uncertain; *coroner* is Warton's conjecture.
[3] Said to mean one in dignity next to a baron.
[4] A painting of the face of Christ, impressed, according to tradition, upon the handkerchief handed by St. Veronica to our Saviour, when bearing the cross to Calvary.
[5] The double relative is very frequent in Chaucer.
[6] A kind of brass.

rous romances, is the best known and most admired of the series of which it forms a part. The scene is laid in Greece in the heroic ages; but, after the fashion of the medieval poets, ancient history is here incongruously blended with the manners of feudalism and the paraphernalia of chivalry. Theseus, Duke of Athens, takes prisoners, and confines in his castle, Palamon and Arcite, two princes of Thebes, cousins and sworn companions in arms. Early one morning they behold from their grated window, fairer than the lily and fresher than May with new flowers, Emily, sister of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, and wife of Theseus, walking in the garden,—

> Her yellow hair was braided in a tress
> Behind her back, a yardé long, I guess.
> And in the garden at the sun *upriste* [*uprisen.*
> She walketh up and down where as her *liste.* [*it pleases.*
> She gathereth flowers, partye white and red,
> To make a *subtle* garland for her head. [*curious.*
> And as an angel heavenly she sung.

Both of them becoming suddenly enamoured with this fair vision, whom Palamon imagines to be the goddess Venus, their friendship as suddenly changes into deadly animosity. Arcite is released from prison through the intercession of his friend Perithous, on condition that under the penalty of instant death he shall banish himself from Athens; but being unable to live out of the sight of Emily, he returns from Thebes in disguise, and obtains service at the court of Theseus as squire of his chamber. Palamon about this time contriving to escape from prison, flees for concealment to a grove in the neighbourhood of Athens, and is there discovered by Arcite, whose errand to the grove is described in the following characteristic verses :—

> The busy larké, messenger of day,
> Saluteth in her song the morrow gray;
> And fiery Phœbus riseth up so bright,
> That all the orient laugheth of the light,
> And with his streamés dryeth in the *greves* [*groves.*
> The silver dropés hanging on the leaves.

And Arcite that is in the court royal,
With Theseus his squire principal,
Is risen and looketh on the merry day.
And for to do his observance to May,
Remembering of the point of his desire,
He on his courser, starting as the fire,
Is ridden into fieldés him to play,
Out of the court, were it a mile or tweye.
And to the grove of which that I you told,
By adventure his way he gan to hold,
To maké him a garland of the greves,
Were it of *woodéwynde* or hawthorn leaves, [*woodbine.*
And loud he sung against the sonne sheen,
"May, with all thine flowers and thy green,
Welcome be thou, well fairé freshé May."

A fierce quarrel takes place between the rivals, and Palamon being unarmed, Arcite brings next day two suits of armour, which, in the true spirit of chivalry, they first help each other to put on, and then engage in mortal battle. Duke Theseus, who happens to be hunting in the forest, comes upon the combatants fighting with the fury of two wild boars, the least blow of their swords seeming sufficient to fell an oak. The duke, on discovering who they are, is at first disposed to put them both to death; but at the earnest intercession of the queen and other ladies of the court, grants them permission to fight in the lists on a certain day a year thence. Each is to be accompanied by a hundred knights, and Emily is to be the prize of the victor. The lists are meanwhile, by the liberality of Theseus, prepared on a scale of magnitude and magnificence worthy of this grand passage of arms. The amphitheatre is a mile in circuit, walled with stone; the gates are of white marble; on the east side is a gorgeous temple dedicated to Venus, and a similar one to Mars on the west; while on the north is an oratory of white alabaster and red coral in worship of Diana, the goddess of chastity. The description of these structures, with their allegorical devices, affords passages of great beauty. That of the temple of "mighty Mars the red," from which the following lines are extracted, strongly exhibits Chaucer's force of imagination:—

There saw I first the dark imagining
Of Felony and all the compassing.

The cruel Ire as red as any *glede;* [*burning coal.*
The *Pikepurs*, and eke the pale Dread; [*pick-purse.*
The Smiler, with the knife under the cloke;
The *schipne* brenning with the blacké smoke; [*stable.*
The Treason of the murdering in the bed;
The open Wars with woundés all be-bled;
*Contek* with bloody knife, and sharp menace; [*contention.*
All full of chirking[1] was that *sorry* place! [*sorrowful.*

The year having expired, Palamon and Arcite arrive at Athens; the former accompanied by Lycurgus, King of Thrace; and the latter by Emetrius, King of Ind; each of these terrific warrior-kings having a hundred knights in his train. In the following passages the poet appears in the glory of his strength, mounted, like the monarch he so magnificently describes, on the golden car of his genius:—

There mayst thou see, coming with Palamon,
Lycurge himself, the greté King of Thrace;
Black was his beard, and manly was his face.
The circles of his eyen in his head,
They gloweden betwixte yellow and red,
And like a griffon[2] looked he about,
With *kempé* herés on his browés stout; [*combed.*
His *limmés* great, his *brawnés* hard and strong, [*limbs...muscles.*
His shoulders broad, his armés round and long.
And as the guisé was in his countré,
Full high upon a car of gold stood he,
With fouré whité bullés in *a trays.* [*traces.*
Instead of coat-armour,[3] on his *harnays*, [*harness.*
With nalés yellow, and bright as any gold,
He had a *beré* skin, coal-black for old; [*bear.*
His longé hair y-kempt behind his back,
As any raven feather it shone for black.
A wreath of gold *arm-great* and huge of weight, [*arm-thick.*
Upon his head sat full of stonés bright,
Of finé rubies and of fine *diamants.* [*diamonds,* (Fr.)
About his car there wenté white *alauns*, [*large greyhounds.*
Twenty and more as great as any steer,
To hunté at the lion, or at the bear,

[1] Crashing, creaking.
[2] From *gryps* (Gr.), a fabulous animal like a lion and an eagle.
[3] A coat worn over the armour, on which the armorial bearings of the wearer were painted or embroidered.

And followed him with muzzle fast y-bound,
Collared with gold, and *torrets* filéd round. [*rings.*
An hundred lordés had he in his *route*, [*company.*
Arméd full well, with hertés stern and stoute.

With Arcita, in stories as men find,
The great Emetrius, the King of Ind,
Upon a steedé bay, trapped in steel,
Covered with cloth of gold, diapered well,
Came riding like the god of armés, Mars.
His coat armoúr was of a cloth of Tars,[1]
*Couchéd* with perlés whité, round and great; [*inlaid or trimmed.*
His saddle was of *brent* gold, newé beat; [*burnished.*
A mantelet upon his shoulder hanging,
Bretful of rubies red, as fire sparkling.
His *crispé* hair like ringés was *ironne*, [*curled...run.*
And that was yellow and glittering as the sun.
His nose was high, his eyen were *citrine*, [*citron.*
His lippés round, his colour was sanguine.
A fewé *freknés* in his face *yspreut*, [*freckles...sprinkled.*
Betwixt yellow and somedeal black *ymeint*; [*mingled.*
And as a lion he his looking cast.
Of five-and-twenty years his age I *cast*. [*reckoned.*
His beard was well begonné for to spring,
His voice was as a trumpet thundering.
Upon his head he wore, of laurel green,
A garland fresh and *lusty* for to seen.[2] [*luxuriant.*
Upon his hond he bore for his delight
An eagle tame as any lily white.
An hundred lordés had he with him there,
All arméd save their headés in their gear,
Full richely in allé manner things.
For trusteth[3] well that dukes, earles, kings,
Were gathered in this noble company,
For love and for increase of chivalry.
About the king there ran on every part
Full many a tamé lion and *lepart*. [*leopard.*

In order to prevent bloodshed, Duke Theseus decrees that those who are at a disadvantage shall not be slain, but brought to stakes erected for that purpose in the lists, the tournay to be finished when either of the chieftains slays the other, or is brought by force

[1] Some suppose this a contraction for Tartarium, others for Tarsus.
[2] Old form of infinitive.
[3] Old form of imperative.

to the stake. The commencement of the fray is thus vigorously described :—

There see men who can joust and who can ride;
In goth the scharpé spear into the side.
There shiver shaftés upon shoulders thick
He[1] feeleth through the *herte-spoon*[2] the prick. [*breast-bone.*
Up springen spears on twenty foot *on height;* [*on high.*
Out go the swerdes as the silver bright,
The helmes there to-hewan and to-shred;[3]
Out bursts the blood with stouté[4] stremés red,
With mighty maces the bones they *to-breste.* [*burst.*
He through the thickest of the throng gan *threste,* [*thrust.*
There stumble steedés strong, and down can fall.
He rolleth under foot as doth a ball,
He foyneth[5] on his foot with a truncheón,
And him hurteleth with his horse adown.
He through the body hurt is, and sithen take,
Maugré his head,[6] and brought into the stake.

The struggle, which lasts the whole day, is thus brought to a conclusion :—

Ere the sun unto the reste went
The strangé King Emetrius *gan hent* [*laid hold of.*
This Palamon, as he fought with Arcite,
And his sword in his fleissch he did bite;
And by the force of twenty he is take,
Unyolden,[7] and i-drawn unto the stake.
And in the rescue of this Palamo
The strong King Lycurgus is borne adown;
And King Emetrius, for all his strength,
Is borne out of his saddle his sword's length,
So hit him Palamon ere he was take;
But all for nought, he was brought to the stake.

Arcite is therefore proclaimed victor, and the destined husband of Emily; but by the interposition of Venus, who favours Palamon, Arcite is thrown from his horse as he makes him curvet along the lists. His speech to Emily as he is dying from the effects of the

[1] *He* is used throughout this passage for *this* and *that.*
[2] So called from its shape.
[3] To hew and cut to pieces; *to* is intensive.
[4] This obsolete use of the word may accord with what is said to be the primary signification, *to shoot forward.*
[5] Maketh passes in fencing.
[6] Against his will.
[7] Not having yielded.

fall, and the description of his last moments, constitute a masterpiece of pathos :—

Alas, the woe ! alas, the painés strong
That I for you have suffered, and so long !
Alas, the death ! alas, mine Emilie !
Alas, departing[1] of our company !
Alas, mine hertés queen ! alas, my wife !
Mine hertés lady, ender of my life !
What is this world ? What asken men to have ?
Now with his love, now in his coldé grave
Alone, withouten any company !
Farewell, my sweet ! farewell, mine Emilie !
And softé take me in your armés twey,
For love of God, and hearkeneth[2] what I say.

With the high-souled generosity of a true knight, he then recounts the virtues of his rival, and commends him as the fittest husband for Emily.

And with that word his speeche fail began,
For from his feet up to his breast was come
The cold of death that had him *overnome*. [*overtaken*.
And yet, moreover, in his armés two
The vital strength is lost, and all *ago*. [*gone*.
Only the intellect withouten more,
That dwelled in his herté sick and sore,
Gan failé when the herté felte death
Dusking his eyen two, and failed breath ;
But on his lady yet he cast his eye,
His lasté word was, "Mercy, Emily !"

## JOHN GOWER.

John Gower, the contemporary and friend of Chaucer, "though not like him a poet of nature's growth, had some effect in rendering the language less rude, and exciting a taste for verse." He was distinguished for extent and variety of learning, and composed in three languages, Latin, French, and English ; his principal work in the latter tongue being the *Confessio Amantis*. In a poem dedicated to him by Chaucer, he is called the "Moral Gower ;" an epithet descriptive of the serious and didactic character of his poetry. He died in 1408.

[1] For the parting. Old form of imperative.

## VISION OF ROSIPHELE.

FROM THE "CONFESSIO AMANTIS."

When come was the month of May,
She would walk upon a day,
And that was ere the sun arist,
Of women but a few it *wist*. [*knew.*
And forth she went privily
Unto a park was fast by,
All softé *walkend* on the grass, [*walking.*
Till she came there[1] the land was
Through which ran a great rivère.
It *thought* her fair, and said, "Here [*seemed to.*
Will I abide under the *shaw*;" [*shade.*
And bade her women withdraw,
And there she stood alone still,
To think what was in her will.
She saw the sweet flowers spring;
She heard the glad fowls sing;
She saw beastes in their kind,
The buck, the doe, the hart, the hind,
The males go with the female;
And so began there a quarél
Between love and her owne heart,
From which she couthé not *astart*. [*free herself.*
And as she cast her eye about,
She saw, clad in one suit, a rout
Of ladies, where they comen ride
Along under the wood side;
On fair *ambulend* horse they set, [*ambling.*
That were all white, fair, and great;
And everiche one rid on side.
The saddles were of such a pride,
So rich saw she never none
With pearls and gold so well begone;
In *kirtels* and in *copés* rich [*gowns...cloaks.*
They were all clothed all *alich*, [*alike.*
*Departed* even of white and blue; [*diversified.*
With all *lustes* that she knew [*colours.*
They were embroidered over all;
Their bodies weren long and small.
The beauty of their fair face
There may no earthly thing deface:
Corownes on their heads they bare
As each of them a queen were;

[1] Supply *where.*

That all the gold of Crœsus' hall
The least coronal of all
Might not have bought, after the worth;
Thus comen they ridend forth.

### JOHN LYDGATE.

Of the poets or versifiers between the times of Chaucer and Surrey, John Lydgate, a monk of Bury, who flourished about 1430, is the most worthy of notice. He was a most voluminous writer, his principal works being *The Fall of Princes*, *The Destruction of Troy*, and *The Siege of Thebes*. Though calling himself the disciple of Chaucer, he follows his master at a long interval, and is generally quoted rather because he is admitted to have materially contributed to the modernization and improvement of the language than on account of his poetical merits. The first of these pieces is nevertheless not destitute of beautiful passages, particularly the personification of Fortune, admired by Warton; and the Death of Canace, praised for its pathos by both Gray and Campbell.

### EARL OF SURREY.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, son of that Duke of Norfolk who commanded at Flodden, was born in 1516. He was bred at the Court of Henry VIII., having spent his boyhood at Windsor Castle as companion to the Earl of Richmond, a natural son of that monarch, with whom he also studied at Oxford. Surrey was distinguished alike for his accomplishments as an elegant scholar and a gallant knight.

"Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,
Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance."

For some years he stood high in the favour of his royal master; but after his sister, Catherine Howard, the wife of Henry, had been sent to the block by her husband, her whole family fell under his ban, and the doom of Surrey was sealed. Committed to the Tower on a charge of high treason for having quartered on his shield the arms of Edward the Confessor, his condemnation followed the trial as a matter of course. His execution on Tower

Hill on this miserable and characteristic pretence was the last of that long series of inhuman freaks that blotted the reign of the "brutal tyrant."

"Surrey, for his justness of thought, correctness of style, and purity of expression, may be pronounced the first English classical poet." His poetry was formed upon Italian models; he was the first who wrote English sonnets; and his translation of a portion of the Æneid also presents the first example of blank verse in English. His verses are mostly amatory, but they likewise include several pieces of a descriptive and reflective character.

DESCRIPTION OF SPRING.

The *soote* season, that bud and bloom forth brings, [*sweet.*
With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale.
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
The turtle to her *make* hath told her tale. [*mate.*
Summer is come, for every spray now springs;
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
The buck in brake his winter coat he slings;
The fishes *flete* with new repaired scale; [*float.*
The adder all her slough away she flings;
The swift swallow pursueth the flies *smale;* [*small.*
The busy bee her honey how she *mings!* [*mingles.*
Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.
And thus I see among these pleasant things
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

## SIR THOMAS WYATT.

The name of Sir Thomas Wyatt is generally coupled with that of his friend and contemporary Surrey, as having co-operated with him in refining the poetic style. Like Surrey, he imitated the Italian poets; but does not equal him "in harmony of numbers, perspicuity of expression, and facility of phraseology." His chief merit lies in his satirical and didactic pieces.

## THOMAS SACKVILLE.

Thomas Sackville, son of Sir Richard Sackville, was born in Sussex in 1536. He was educated at the Universities of Oxford

and Cambridge, and afterwards studied law at the Inner Temple, where he evinced a predilection for more congenial pursuits by composing "the first regular English tragedy," variously called *Gorboduc* and *Ferrex and Porrex*. A more mature and remarkable production of his poetical genius was his *Induction to the Mirror of Magistrates;* a work said to have been planned by himself, and intended to pass in review from the Conquest downwards the great personages in English history remarkable for misfortune. The allegorical characters drawn by Sackville in this piece are little, if at all, inferior in power to those of Spenser; but after having finished the legend of the Duke of Buckingham, he was himself called away to play an important part in the great world of political ambition. The discerning eye of Elizabeth having marked his abilities, he was soon exalted to a high position in the administration of public affairs; and he held the office of Lord High Treasurer of England at the time of his death, which happened while he sat at the Council Board in the year 1608.

### JOHN SKELTON.

John Skelton, born about 1460, was rector of Diss in Norfolk, and is best known for his satires upon the clergy, and particularly for the boldness with which he attacked the haughty and all-powerful Wolsey. His writings are valuable in a historical point of view, inasmuch as many of them treat of passing incidents and popular manners; and being addressed to the mass of his countrymen rather than to the high and the learned, they differ entirely in style and phraseology from the verses of such courtly writers as Surrey and Wyatt. He is usually grotesque, and seldom free from coarseness, but displays abundant liveliness and humour, has unlimited command of words, and is considered to have assisted in conferring fixity upon the language. Of his peculiar versification, which consisted mostly of short couplets or triplets, the following is one of the most pleasing specimens, both as regards manner and matter :—

MRS. MARGARET HUSSEY.

Merry Margaret
As midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower;
With solace and gladness,
Much mirth and no madness,
All good and no badness;
So joyously,
So maidenly,
So womanly,
Her demeaning,
In everything
Far, far passing
That I can indite,
Or suffice to write,
Of merry Margaret,
As midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower;
As patient and as still,
And as full of good will,
As fair Isiphil,
Coliander,
Sweet Pomander,
Good Cassander;
Steadfast of thought,
Well made, well wrought,
Far may be sought
Ere you can find
So courteous, so kind,
As merry Margaret,
This midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower.

## SCOTCH POETS.

### BARBOUR.

John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen in the reign of David II., may be termed the Father of Scottish Poetry. His poem of *The Bruce* narrates those events connected with the War of Independence in which the heroic king is the central figure; and it has the merit of combining historical fidelity with the animation and poetical

colouring of the romance. The style of Barbour is simple and vigorous, his versification easy, and his descriptions of individual character distinct and discriminating. He was skilled in the learning of his time, and is supposed to have studied at the University of Oxford, which he twice visited under the safe conduct of Edward III. He died in 1396.

### FREEDOM.

Ah, freedom is a noble thing!
Freedom makes man to have liking;
Freedom all solace to man gives;
He lives at ease that freely lives.
A noble heart may have *nane* ease, [*none.*
*Na ellis noch* that may him please, [*nothing else.*
*Gif* freedom faileth; for free liking [*if.*
Is *yearnit our* all other thing: [*wished above.*
Na he that aye has *livit* free, [*lived.*
May noch know weill the *properte*, [*reality.*
The anger, na the wretched *dome*, [*doom.*
That is couplit to foul *thyrldome*. [*thraldom.*
But gif he had assayit it,
Then all *perquer* he should it *wit*, [*perfectly...condemn.*
And suld think freedom more to *pryss* [*prize.*
Than all the gold in warld that is.

### JAMES I.

The seizure of the young Scottish Prince, afterwards James I. of Scotland, by the English during a truce; his imprisonment in England for nineteen years; his romantic attachment to Lady Jane Beaufort, whom he first beheld walking in a garden as he stood at the window of his prison in Windsor Castle; the marriage of the lovers; their coronation on his return to Scotland; and the tragical end of James, who was assassinated at Perth,—are all known to the readers of Scottish history.

His principal work, *The King's Quhair* (*i.e.*, Book), is in the style and spirit of Chaucer, of whom he was no mean disciple. He is also supposed to have been the author of *Christ's Kirk on the Green* and *Peebles to the Play*, both of which humorously describe the manners and amusements of the Scottish peasantry.

## THE PRISON WINDOW.

### LOVE AND LADY JANE BEAUFORT.

Oft would I think, O Lord, what this may be,
That love is of so noble *michte* and kind! [*might.*
Loving his folk and such prosperite
Is it of him as we in *bukis* find? [*books.*
May he our hertis *sctten* and unbind? [*fix.*
Hath he upon our hertis such *maistrie,* [*mastery.*
Or all this is but *feinit* fantasie? [*feigned.*

For gif he be of so great excellence,
That he of every wight hath *cure* and charge, [*care.*
What have I *gilt* to him or done offence, [*been guilty of.*
That I am thrall, and birdis gone at large,
*Sen* him to serve he micht set my *corage?* [*seeing—heart.*
And gif he be not so, then may I *seyne,* [*say.*
What makes folk to *jangill* of him in veyne? [*babble.*

Can I not ellis find but gif that he
Be lord, and as a god may live and regne,
To bind and loose, and maken thrallis free,
Then would I pray his blissful grace benigne
To *hable* me unto his service digne, [*make fit.*
And evermore for to be one of *tho* [*those.*
Him truly for to serve in weal and woe.

And therewith *kest* I doun mine eye ageyne, [*cast.*
Where as I saw walking under the Tower,
Full secretly new comen her to *pleyne,* [*amuse.*
The fairest or the freshest yonge flower
That e'er I saw methocht before that hour:
For which sudden abate[1] anon *astert* [*rushed.*
The blood of all my body to my hert.

And tho' I stood abaisit tho a lyte,[2]
No wonder was; for why? my wittis all
Were so o'ercome with plesance and delyte,
Only through letting of mine eyen fall,
That suddenly my hert became her thrall
For ever of free will; for of menace
There was no token in her swecte face.

And in my head I drew *richt* hastily, [*right.*
And *eftsones* I lent it out ageyne, [*soon after.*

[1] Letting or casting down of the eyes. [2] Abashed, or astonished then a little.

And saw her walk that very womanly,
With no wight mo' but only women tweyne ;
Then gan I study in myself, and *seyne*, [*say.*
" Ah, Sweete ! are ye a warldly creature,
Or heavenly thing in likeness of nature ? "

## WILLIAM DUNBAR.

William Dunbar is reckoned by some authorities the greatest poet that Scotland has produced. He was born about the year 1465, was educated at St. Andrews, and entering the monastic order of St. Francis, he travelled as a friar in England, Scotland, and France. He was afterwards employed by James IV., probably in the capacity of a clerk, in embassies to various foreign courts ; and in 1500 he received a pension from the King, which was gradually increased to the sum of eighty pounds per annum. He is supposed to have died about 1520. The surpassing merit of Dunbar's poems lay buried in manuscript for upwards of two centuries. They display remarkable versatility of genius, and prove him to have been equally great in the sublime, the didactic, and the humorous. He excels in allegorical description ; his principal poems, *The Thistle and the Rose*, *The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins*, and *The Golden Targe*, being all, in accordance with the fashion of the time, written in that style. The occasion of the first of these pieces, as the title tells us, was the marriage of James IV. with Margaret Tudor ; and in *The Golden Targe*, Reason is the safeguard or target that is to protect us from the assaults of passion. Some of the didactic pieces of Dunbar belong to the first rank of excellence ; and in his comic and satirical vein he exhibits the insight of the true poet into human life and character.

### OPENING STANZAS OF "THE THISTLE AND THE ROSE."

When March was with variand windis past,
And Aperil had with her silver showers
*Tane* leave at Nature with ane orient blast, [*taken.*
And lusty May, that mother is of flowers,
Had made the birdis to begin their *hours*, [*orisons.*

Amang the tender odours red and white,
Whose harmony to hear it was delight:

In bed at morrow, sleeping as I lay,
Methocht Aurora, with her crystal *ene*, [*eyes.*
In at the window lookit by the day,
And *halsit* me with visage pale and green ; [*hailed.*
On whose hand a lark sang fro the spleen,
Awauk, lovers, out of your slomering ;
See how the lusty morrow does upspring.

### GAWAIN DOUGLAS.

Gawain Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld (1474–1522), was the son of that Archibald, Earl of Angus, so famous in Scottish history for his share in the transaction by which he obtained the name of "Bell-the-Cat." Through the influence of his nephew, Angus, who had become the husband of Margaret, widow of James IV., he was promoted to the see of Dunkeld; but when the house of Douglas gave way to the power of the Regent Albany, the Bishop sought refuge in London, where he died of the plague in 1522.

In *The Palace of Honour*, an allegorical poem, dedicated to James IV., Douglas anticipates the design of the Bishop of Cambray in his *Telemaque;* that is, the instruction of a prince: and in *King Hart* (*i.e.*, Heart) is exemplified the system of moral teaching then prevalent, by personifying the senses and affections. His largest and most important work is his translation of Virgil's *Æneid* into heroic verse, wherein he has the merit not only of being the first of our poets that rendered classic poetry into the vernacular, but his version is esteemed as a spirited and elegant performance; and many beautiful passages are to be found in the prologues to the several books. He also translated Ovid's *Remedy of Love.*

### SIR DAVID LYNDSAY.

Sir David Lyndsay was born in Haddingtonshire towards the end of the fifteenth century, and termed Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, from an estate of that name in Fifeshire which he inherited from his father. On leaving the University of St. Andrews, he was appointed to the office of page and companion to the young

King, James V., by whom he was in the year 1530 knighted and invested with the dignity of "Lord Lyon King-at-Arms." He was honoured with the confidence of his sovereign in various important negotiations, and in 1542 he witnessed his premature and melancholy death.

Although the poems of Lyndsay are of a practical and controversial rather than an imaginative character, some of them display great power of description and imagery. Having adopted the principles of the Reformation, he attacked the corruptions of the clergy with uncompromising severity, and his bold and plain-spoken satire, which did not spare the vices and follies of royalty itself, powerfully influenced the minds of his countrymen to give effect to the sweeping denunciations of Knox. His principal work, the *Satire on the Three Estates*, bears a close resemblance in structure to the old moral play; and his *History of Squire Meldrum*, a metrical romance, is said to be the last example of that species of composition. He also wrote the political poems of the *Dreme* and the *Complaint of the Papingo;* the first of which describes the evil effects of the Angus domination; and in the other, both Court and Clergy receive the lessons of wisdom from the king's parrot. *The Monarchie* is a versified summary of universal history; which, according to Irving, is more than a meagre compendium, "the poet's principal object being not to detail events, but by referring to the great occurrences recorded in sacred and profane history, to illustrate general positions."

### WINTON—BLIND HARRY—HENRYSON.

Amongst the Scotch poets of this period we cannot overlook the names of Andrew Winton, Henry the Minstrel, and Robert Henryson. Winton was contemporary with Barbour, and author of a chronicle of Scottish history, which is written with freedom and spirit, and presents interesting pictures of the manners and customs of ancient Scottish society. Of "Blind Harry," who composed *The Adventures of Sir William Wallace*, little more is known than that he flourished about the middle of the fifteenth century, and that he obtained a livelihood by reciting his verses to

people of high rank. His poem is more purely a romance than that of his learned predecessor, Barbour, being founded chiefly upon popular tradition. Recent investigations, however, have verified several incidents of historical importance, such as the expedition of Wallace to France. As a composition, *The Wallace* is considered inferior to *The Bruce* in every respect except in correctness of versification. Henryson (1425–1495) was a schoolmaster at Dunfermline. His famous pastoral of *Robin and Makyne* is the first and one of the best in the Scottish tongue; and his sequel to Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida* abounds in imagery of uncommon beauty.

## II.—PROSE WRITERS.

### MANDEVILLE—WYCLIFFE—CHAUCER.

Our earliest prose writers belong to the latter half of the fourteenth century, and are represented by Mandeville, Wycliffe, and Chaucer. Sir John Mandeville's account of his travels in the East is the first English prose book, having been written about the year 1360. It is a curious old history, abounding in marvellous stories and legends, but evincing at the same time geographical correctness and acuteness of observation. Wycliffe's version of the Scriptures, which was completed in 1383, is admitted to have had considerable influence in the development of the language, both in its immediate operation as a reading medium, and in becoming to a considerable extent the basis of subsequent translations. Chaucer's prose works consist of two of the *Canterbury Tales;* a treatise on astronomy, written for the benefit of his son; a translation of Boethius; and an imitation of that author, which he designates *The Testament of Love.* Upon these he has stamped the impress of his genius as well as upon his poetry. Not till the close of the period did anything appear to rival them in ease and perspicuity of style, or in extent and force of vocabulary. With the exception of Trevisa, who translated Higden's *Polychronicon*, there is no other prose author worthy of notice in the fourteenth century.

### THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ENVY.

FROM "THE PARSON'S TALE."—(*Chaucer.*)

The species of envy ben these: There is first sorrow of other men's goodness and of their prosperity; and prosperity ought to be kindly[1] matter of joy; then is envy a sin against kind.[2] The second species of envy is joy of other men's harm; and that is properly like to the devil, that ever rejoiceth him of man's harm. Of these two species cometh backbiting; and this sin of backbiting or detracting hath certain species, as thus: Some man praiseth his neighbour by a wicked intent, for he maketh alway a wicked knot at the last end; alway he maketh a *but* at the last end, that is digne[3] of more blame than is worth all the praising: the second species is, that if a man be good, or doth or sayeth a thing to good intent, the backbiter will turn all that goodness upside down to his shrewd[4] intent: the third is to amenuse[5] the bounty of his neighbour: the fourth species of backbiting is this, that if men speak goodness of a man, then will the backbiter say, Parfay,[6] such a man is better than he, in dispraising of him that men praise: the fifth species is this, for to consent gladly to hearken the harm that men speak of other folk; this sin is full great, and aye increaseth after the wicked intent of the backbiter.

## PECOCK—FORTESCUE—CAXTON.

In the fifteenth century Pecock, Fortescue, and Caxton are the only names whose feeble light relieves the intellectual darkness that prevailed. Bishop Pecock wrote against the Lollards or Wycliffites; but his books were condemned as containing too liberal opinions, and he was obliged in consequence to make a public abjuration. His principal works extant are *The Repressor*, a defence of the clergy from the attacks of the Lollards; and *The Book of Faith*. A more important production than either of these was the *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ* of Sir John Fortescue, Chief Justice of the King's Bench in the reign of Henry VI. It was written in Holland during his exile with the unfortunate Queen Margaret, being intended for the guidance of his royal charge, the young Prince Edward, in the event of his obtaining the crown. Fortescue was also the author of an English treatise on the difference between an absolute and a limited monarchy, which indicates an approach to modern diction.

The sixty-four works which Caxton issued from the press were

[1] Naturally. [2] Nature. [3] Worthy. [4] Wicked. [5] Lessen. [6] By my faith.

chiefly translations. We venerate his name, however, less for his literary ability than for the mighty impulse which he gave to learning by the introduction of the art of printing into England. It was during his residence abroad that he became acquainted with this invention. The first book printed in English was his translation of the *Recueil des Histoires de Troye*, by Raoul Le Fevre. It was printed in 1471 either at Cologne or Bruges, and was succeeded by other translations, mostly taken from the French. In 1474 he returned to London, and established himself as a printer in Westminster. *The Game and Playe of the Chesse* was the first specimen of typography executed in England. For nearly twenty years after it was produced, Caxton, now advanced in age, was constantly occupied in translating, inditing, and printing. He died in 1492, bequeathing his business to Wynkyn de Worde, who had been in his employment. Although the art was greatly improved by Wynkyn and the other immediate successors of Caxton, yet, as they were all foreigners and men of little learning, they unconsciously permitted many errors to creep into the numerous works which they published.

Of other compilations of this century the most popular was Sir Thomas Mallory's *Collection of the Legends of Prince Arthur*, whose chivalrous adventures were still in great request. It has been frequently printed since Caxton first gave it to the world. *The Paston Letters*, written by members of the Paston family during the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV., form another interesting relic of the same age. Besides their historical value, they furnish an example of the colloquial style, which, in this case, is not only lively and fluent, but wonderfully correct.

### MORE—ELYOT—ASCHAM.

In the first half of the sixteenth century the writings of More, Elyot, and Ascham, not only indicate culture and thought, but also mark the near approach of the language to its modern form. Sir Thomas More was educated for the bar, and was appointed Under-Sheriff of London in 1502. His fame as a lawyer attracted the attention of Henry VIII., by whom he was called to office,

and employed on various missions of importance. He was a great favourite at Court, which he adorned and enlivened by his brilliant discourse and sallies of wit. The fall of Wolsey in 1529 advanced him to the Lord Chancellorship of England; an office which he invested with high talent and rare integrity. But he, too, was doomed to fall a victim to the unsparing tyranny of Henry. His disapproval of the divorce of Queen Catherine led to his resignation. Persecution followed him to his retirement. He refused to take the oath of supremacy, and was in consequence committed to the Tower. After having been tried for high treason, he was executed on the 6th of July 1535.

More was distinguished no less for his scholarship and literary tastes than for his professional ability. He was the friend of Erasmus, and occupied a conspicuous place amongst those who urged on the revival of classical learning. His *Utopia*, written in Latin, which describes a model republic after the manner of Plato, and which is remarkable for the originality of its conception, as well as for the liberality of its sentiments, has been pronounced to be the only work of genius that England produced in that age. The same authority considers his *History of Edward V. or Richard III.*, written about 1509, to be the first example of "good English language, pure and perspicuous, well chosen, without vulgarisms or pedantry."

Another scholar who flourished at the Court of Henry VIII. was Sir Thomas Elyot, author of *The Governor*, which treats chiefly of education. In genius Elyot is ranked below More, but equal if not superior to Ascham.

Roger Ascham was public orator of the University of Cambridge. This office naturally led to the composition of many desultory pieces of writing. The first regular treatise which he composed was the *Toxophilus*, where he descants in excellent English upon his favourite pursuit of archery. His principal work was *The Schoolmaster*, a valuable treatise on education, still referred to as containing sound maxims upon that important subject. The style is graceful and vigorous, and is rendered more interesting from the fact that we can trace in it the com-

mencement of the Latinized diction which revolutionized our vocabulary before the close of the century.

LEARNING TEACHETH MORE THAN EXPERIENCE.

FROM ASCHAM'S "SCHOOLMASTER."

Learning teacheth more in one year than experience in twenty; and learning teacheth safely when experience maketh mo miserable than wise. He hazardeth sore that waxeth wise by experience. An unhappy master he is that is made cunning by many shipwrecks; a miserable merchant that is neither rich nor wise but after some bankrouts. It is costly wisdom that is bought by experience. We know by experience itself, that it is a marvellous pain to find out but a short way by long wandering. And surely he that would prove wise by experience, he may be witty indeed, but even like a swift runner, that runneth fast out of his way, and upon the night, he knoweth not whither. And, verily, they be fewest in number that be happy or wise by unlearned experience. And look well upon the former life of those few, whether your example be old or young, who without learning have gathered, by long experience, a little wisdom and some happiness; and when you do consider what mischief they have committed, what dangers they have escaped (and yet twenty for one do perish in the adventure), then think well with yourself whether ye would that your own son should come to wisdom and happiness by the way of such experience or no.

THE SCRIPTURES.

One of the most important productions of this period was the translation of the New Testament by Tyndale, which was completed at Antwerp in 1526, and afterwards secretly conveyed into England. Following in a certain measure the version of Wycliffe, it very much surpasses it in elegance of style, being at the same time much admired for its simplicity. Tyndale also translated a considerable portion of the Old Testament; and the various editions of the Bible presently to be noticed are all more or less founded upon his version. Miles Coverdale, who assisted him in a second edition of the New Testament, published the whole Bible in 1535. This was superseded by Matthews', which was circulated with the consent of Henry in 1537. Cranmer's Bible is dated 1539, and is so called from the preface, which was written by him. The Geneva Bible was translated by several English divines, who fled to that city from the persecution of Queen Mary. It was finished in 1557. We have then the Bishops' Bible in 1568, published in London, and carefully executed by

eight bishops aided by some of the first scholars of the day, the whole being superintended by the learned Archbishop Parker.

### THEOLOGICAL AND CONTROVERSIAL WRITERS.

Few of the works of the theologians and controversialists of the Reformation have acquired a permanent place in literature. Their names, however, will always command respect for the ability and energy they displayed during that great crisis of our history. First may be mentioned Latimer, who urged on the movement by sermons full of rough eloquence and keen invective; next Cranmer, who assisted in the compilation of the *Service and Articles of Religion*, and contributed some of the homilies; then Ridley, an abler and a nobler man than either, and one of the leading controversialists. Bishop Hooper, the popular preacher; Dr. Becon, with his quaint titles and powerful reasoning; Bale, Bishop of Ossory, violent and coarse; Tyndale; and Bishop Jewel, the classic scholar and author of the *Apologia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, considered one of the ablest works of the age; were all coadjutors in expounding and defending the doctrines of the Reformed Church. Their chief antagonists were Cardinal Pole, the scholar and patron of learning, author of a *Defence of the Supremacy of the Pope;* Bishop Fisher, who wrote in favour of the Roman Catholic theory of the Sacraments; Sir Thomas More; and Dr. Harding, the opponent of Bishop Jewel. In connection with these we may here mention John Fox, a very able and learned divine, but one who did not occupy a high position in the Church. He was the author of the *Acts and Monuments of the Church*, more commonly known as the *Book of Martyrs;* a work which received the sanction of the bishops of the time, but whose accuracy is justly questioned. It was published at Strasburg in 1554.

The following extract from Latimer's sermons affords a specimen of his direct and homely style of preaching:—

#### THE DEVIL A DILIGENT PREACHER.

FROM BISHOP BURNET'S TRANSLATION.

I would ask a strange question: Who is the most diligentest bishop and prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing his office? I can tell, for

I know him, who it is: I know him well. But now I think I see you listening and hearkening that I should name him. There is one that passeth all the other, and is the most diligent prelate and preacher in all England. And will you know who it is? I will tell you; it is the devil. He is the most diligent preacher of all other: he is never out of his diocess; he is never from his cure; ye shall never find him unoccupied: he is ever in his parish; he keepeth residence at all times: ye shall never find him out of the way; call for him when you will, he is ever at home;—the diligentest preacher in all the realm: he is ever at his plough; no lording or loitering can hinder him; he is ever applying his business; ye shall never find him idle, I warrant you. . . . . .

Oh that our prelates would be as diligent to sow the corn of good doctrine as Satan is to sow cockle and darnel! But here some man will say to me, What, sir, are ye so privy of the devil's counsel that ye know all this to be true? Truly I know him too well, and have obeyed him a little too much in condescending to some follies; and I know him as other men do, yea, that he is ever occupied, and ever busy in following his plough.

## MISCELLANEOUS WRITERS.

Lord Berners is noted as the translator of *Froissart's Chronicles*, which relate the events that occurred not only in France, but also in England and other parts of Europe between 1326 and 1400. They present a lively picture of the manners of that chivalrous age, and form besides a valuable repository for the historian. Berners' translation was published at London in 1525, and is allowed to have been executed "with wonderful felicity." John Ballenden, or Bellenden, court poet in the reign of James V., deserves notice as having bequeathed to us the first specimen of literary prose in the Scottish dialect. He translated from Latin the *History of Scotland*, written by Hector Boece, or Boyce. Boece was a distinguished scholar, and was called by Bishop Elphinstone to preside over the university which he had founded in Aberdeen. His History displays good scholarship, but like Geoffrey of Monmouth's Chronicles, deals more in fabulous than authentic narrative. Bellenden's translation appeared in 1536, the year in which Boece died. The *Life of Wolsey* was an important contribution to historical literature. It was written by George Cavendish, one of the few who adhered to Wolsey after his fall. Cavendish died in 1557. In 1553 Thomas Wilson, Dean of Durham, wrote able treatises on logic and rhetoric.

## CHAPTER III.

### LANGUAGE AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

The three tongues continued to be used during the last half of the fourteenth century. Striking illustrations of the transition from Latin to French and from French to English are afforded in the writings of Mandeville and Gower. Mandeville states that his book was first written in Latin, then translated into French, and afterwards into English. Gower's earliest works were composed in Latin and French, and his last in the native tongue. The absorption of French words still went on, as is amply manifested in the writings of Chaucer and Gower; by the former of whom the two elements were so skilfully blended that the capabilities of the language were thereby greatly increased. In the course of the fifteenth century the influx of French vocables gradually ceased, while the manufacture of words directly from the Latin began to take its place. After the revival of classical learning this practice became so fashionable among authors, that during the greater part of the sixteenth century the language experienced a kind of revolution. It remained for the writers of the Elizabethan era to give it stability both in structure and vocabulary. The form which it then assumed has received the name of Modern English, and it has subsisted with little alteration to the present day. The accessions made to its vocabulary during the last three centuries are chiefly scientific terms adopted from the Greek. A few words of foreign origin have also been introduced by the extension of commerce.

Middle English is the last stage in the process of simplification. The final *e* of Early English is now dropped, and the remnants of Anglo-Saxon inflection are almost entirely discarded. The article is indeclinable, and applies to all cases, genders, and numbers. Originally a demonstrative, it is now less definite. Nouns are reduced to one declension, which retains of inflection only the genitive *es* or *s* and the plural *es*. A few Saxon plurals remain, as, *oxen*,

*eyen.* The personal pronoun of the first person is *I* or *ic; heo* becomes *she; hi, hem,* and *hire* are gradually changing into *they, them, their. Ye* is used as the nominative plural, and *you* as the objective. In verbs, first the final *n* of the infinitive is dropped, and then the final *e.* The plural of the present indicative is now frequently changed from *eth* to *en;* as, *we, ye,* or *they loven.* In the plural of the past tense *en* alone is employed; as, *we, ye,* or *they loveden.* The present participle now terminates in *ing,* the old forms being occasionally found. Orthography and pronunciation are still much unsettled. The following passages in illustration of the language are given in the original orthography:—

### THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ENVY.[1]

CHAUCER.

The spices of envie ben these. Ther is first sorwe of other mennes goodnesse and of her prosperitee; and prosperitee ought to be kindly mater of joye; than is envie a sinne ayenst kinde. The seconde spice of envie is joye of other mennes harme; and that is proprely like to the divel, that ever rejoyseth him of mannes harme. Of thise two spices cometh backbiting; and this sinne of backbiting or detracting hath certain spices, as thus: Som man preiseth his neighbour by a wicked entente, for he maketh alway a wicked knotte at the laste ende; alway he maketh a *but* at the last ende, that is digne of more blame than is worth all the preising.

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### FROM SIR THOMAS MORE'S LETTER TO LADY MORE,

ON HEARING THAT HIS BARNS AND SOME OF THOSE OF HIS NEIGHBOURS HAD BEEN BURNED DOWN.

Maistres Alyce, in my most harty wise I recommend me to you; and, whereas I am enfourmed by my son Heron of the losse of our barnes and of our neighbours also, with all the corn that was therein, albeit (saving God's pleasure) it is gret pitie of so much good corne lost, yet, sith it hath liked hym to sende us such a chaunce, we must and are bounden, not only to be content, but also to be glad of his visitacion. He sente us all that we have loste; and, sith he hath by such a chaunce taken it away againe, his pleasure be fulfilled. Let us never grudge ther at, but take it in good worth, and hartely thank him, as well for adversetie as for prosperitie. And, peradventure, we have more cause to thank him for our losse then for our winning; for his wisdome better seeth what is good for us then we do our selves. Therfore I pray you be of good chere, and take all the howsold with you to church, and there thanke God, both for that

[1] See this passage modernized and explained at page 87.

he hath given us, and for that he hath taken from us, and for that he hath left us, which, if it please hym, he can encrease when he will. And, if it please hym to leave us yet lesse, at his pleasure be it.

I pray you to make some good ensearche what my poore neighbours have lost, and bid them take no thought therfore; for, and I should not leave myself a spone, there shal no pore neighbour of mine bere no losse by any chaunce happened in my house. I pray you be, with my children and your household, merry in God. And devise some what with your frendes, what waye wer best to take for provision to be made for corne for our household, and for sede thys yere comming, if ye thinke it good that we kepe the ground stil in our handes. And, whether ye think it good that we so shall do or not, yet I think it were not best sodenlye thus to leave it all up, and to put away our folk of our farme till we have somewhat advised us thereon. How beit, if we have more nowe then ye shall nede, and which can get them other maisters, ye may then discharge us of them. But I would not that any man were sodenly sent away he wote nere wether.

# MODERN ENGLISH.

(First Period—1558-1660.)

## CHAPTER I.

### POETRY.

Introduction—Allegorical poets—Metaphysical poets—Court poets—Historical and other poets—Satirists—Poetical translations.

This period, which includes several distinct historical epochs, comprises Modern English in its first stage. For the circumstances more or less remotely connected with the literary pre-eminence that distinguishes the Elizabethan era, we must extend our researches beyond the page of British history; we must take into account the influence of the Revival of Letters after the fall of Constantinople in 1453; and we must bear in mind that the Art of Printing was now rapidly aiding the development of literature and enlarging the sphere of intelligence. Learning, no longer confined to the precincts of the college or the gloom of the cloister, began to wax into that "august sunrise," whose benign influence was to be shed upon the mind of clerk and layman, prince and peasant, alike. Maritime enterprise, aided by science and genius, had also presented to Europe the magnificent gift of a New World; and the spirit of enthusiasm evoked by that dazzling vision has bequeathed to authentic history, narratives that will never cease to fill with admiration the imaginations of mankind. This event, fraught with consequences so vast and so momentous, being followed at no great interval by the Reformation, the mind of Europe was again stirred to its inmost depths; and on the theatre of English history, the termination of the religious

struggle was marked by the majestic epoch of the Spanish Armada. The circumstances that launched the whole of the civilized world upon a new career of intellectual activity must be acknowledged to have operated with peculiar force upon the English nation, particularly if viewed in connection with the birth of her naval supremacy in the discoveries and achievements of the Frobishers and the Drakes; whose fame, with that of the Sidneys and the Raleighs, is associated with the literature of the period as inseparably as the triumphs of Marathon and Salamis are associated with the literary glory of Athens.

The progress of English poetry in the previous stage, though breathing the spirit and emulating the refinement of the Tuscan models, afforded but inadequate indications of the power and splendour with which it was to burst forth during this period. Spenser, Shakspeare and the other dramatic poets, constitute the peculiar glory of what is distinctively termed the Elizabethan Era; but the depth of reflection and opulence of fancy, the felicitous "economy" of expression, and the melodious witchery of these writers, are more or less shared by many of their contemporaries, and particularly by several of the contributors to the collections entitled *England's Helicon* and *Davidson's Rhapsody.*

## ALLEGORICAL OR SPENSERIAN SCHOOL.

The examples of the allegorical school of Spenser are chiefly limited to the poems of the brothers Phineas and Giles Fletcher; the former the author of *The Purple Island*, and the latter of *Christ's Victory and Triumph.* The poem of Phineas displays the luxuriance of fancy and power over numbers that might be anticipated from a youthful genius who had prescribed to himself the noble aim of treading in the steps of Spenser; but the subject would seem strangely repellent to a poetical imagination. The *Purple Island* is in fact an anatomical description of the bodily and mental constitution of man, wherein the veins, arteries, bones, and muscles are likened to rivers, mountains, and other geographical features; but although the metaphor is thus frequently carried to

the brink of the ludicrous, there are in the poem many passages of acknowledged beauty. Praise which is bestowed only on poetry of the highest kind, that of harmony, energy, and sublimity, has been liberally attributed to the work of his brother Giles. Some of his descriptions burn with all the splendours of Iris; and the speech of Justice before the throne of God, demanding that sentence should be passed on the human race, is a remarkable specimen of power and compactness of expression.

William Brown, author of *Britannia's Pastorals*, referred by Hallam to the historical or narrative school, was also a disciple of Spenser. "His poetry abounds in beautiful landscapes, painted with much delicacy of feeling, and not without richness of fancy." The objection made to his poetry by one eminent critic is, that "it is the beauty of mere landscape and allegory, without the character and manner that constitute human interest." His versification is distinguished by a musical flow not attained to by many of his contemporaries.

## METAPHYSICAL POETS.

The typical examples of this school are Donne and Cowley; and its peculiarities pervade the poems of Quarles, Crashaw, Herbert, Habington, and Vaughan. The propriety of the designation conferred upon these writers by Dryden and Dr. Johnson has been frequently challenged; but it may be retained until replaced by one of greater authority. They are remarkable for the singularity of their phraseology, their recondite allusions, forced conceits, and fantastic illustrations; thus differing from their predecessors, the Elizabethan poets, who drew their images from nature, "not laboriously, but luckily." They were for the most part greatly distinguished for erudition, and as it was their object rather to excite admiration by the ingenious display of that accomplishment than to move the feelings of the reader, they would for that purpose "fetch an amorous sentiment from the depths of science." To the element of pathos, an atmosphere thus chilled by frigidity of conceit was utterly uncongenial; and

it was beyond the power of genius to exalt extravagant hyperbole and unnatural metaphor to grandeur or sublimity. This curious style will be best indicated by a few examples.

The abstruseness of the following verses by Donne, upon Man as a Microcosm, may by some be considered sufficient to justify the application of the term "metaphysical:"—

> "If men be worlds, there is in every one
> Something to answer in some proportion
> All the world's riches; and in good men, this,
> Virtue, our form's form, and our soul's soul, is."

In the *Weeper*, a poem by Crashaw which has several beautiful stanzas, the eyes of Mary Magdalene are thus celebrated:—

> "Every morn from hence
> A brisk cherub something sips,
> Whose sacred influence
> Adds sweetness to his sweetest lips;
> Then to his music, and his song
> Tastes of his breakfast all day long."[1]

This example of bad taste is almost equalled by the simile in the following passage from one of Herbert's best poems:—

> "Sweet Spring! full of sweet days and roses!
> A *box* where sweets compacted lie."

The following lines are from the description of hell in Cowley's *Davideis:*—

> "Beneath the dens where unfledged tempests lie,
> And infant winds their tender voices try."

The epidemic of conceit and bad taste infected much of the poetry of the time of James and the First Charles. Herrick is

[1] The following well-known lines of Chesterfield seem to have been borrowed from this poem:—

> "The dews of the evening most carefully shun,
> Those tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

Crashaw's are:—

> "Not in the evening's eyes,
> When they red with weeping are
> For the sun that dies,
> Sits sorrow with a face so fair

not free from it; and there are many traces of it in the writings of Carew. It may be said to have died out with Cowley.

It remains to be noticed regarding Quarles, Herbert, Crashaw, Habington, and Vaughan, that their poetry being chiefly of a solemn and devotional cast, they have by certain writers been classed with Southwell and others as Sacred Poets.

## COURT POETS.

Carew, Herrick, Lovelace, Waller, and Suckling, are the most distinguished of that class of writers, who, devoting themselves chiefly to the celebration of courtly beauty and kindred themes, have been variously termed the Poets of Gallantry and the Court Poets. Of the gracefulness that characterizes this school, a few pieces of Carew probably afford the best specimens; but in the more poetical essentials of poetry he is surpassed by Herrick, some of whose short anacreontics blend the refinement of art with the sweetness and simplicity of the ballad. Inferior to Carew and Herrick in fancy and depth of feeling, Waller is more uniformly smooth and correct in his metre; qualities of which he had early resolved to render his poetry the model. Suckling is pre-eminently the poet of gaiety, and unites the terseness of the old models to his own characteristic sprightliness.

## HISTORICAL AND OTHER POETS.

Of the Historical and Descriptive Poetry of this period, Daniel and Drayton are the most prominent representatives; and the poem of Sir John Davis on the Immortality of the Soul affords the earliest example in our literature of the Philosophical or Didactic School. It is written in long quatrains, or, as it is also termed, elegiac verse, and has been praised by the most eminent critics for its happy union of sententious elegance of expression with poetical imagination. The poem of *Cooper's Hill* by Denham is both philosophical and descriptive; and the distinction attributed to him by Pope and Johnson, of improving our numbers and

advancing the language, has to a considerable extent been subscribed to by Hallam.

## SATIRISTS.

The satires of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich, afford an interesting picture of the manners of the times, and are the first in the language that combine energy of thought with precision of expression and elegance of versification. John Marston, the dramatist, is chiefly distinguished for the vehemence and coarseness of his invective. The versification of Donne is so rugged that he is believed to have been studiously negligent of prosody, at least in his satires, which are of the same class as those of Hall. They were modernized by Pope.

## POETICAL TRANSLATIONS.

The translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* by Chapman are considered to be among the most successful attempts of the kind. These versions are written in Alexandrine metre of fourteen syllables, in an easy and vigorous style, and have enriched the language with several highly poetical compound epithets. They were read with delight by Waller; and after taking exception to the defects of haste, negligence, and unwarranted redundancy, Pope concludes his stricture upon them in laudatory terms. A recent critic says that "the earnestness and passion which he has put into every part of these translations would be incredible to a reader of mere modern translations." The translation of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* by Edward Fairfax, who died in 1632, retains its place as a classical work, both as the best English version of the original that has yet appeared, and on account of its harmonious versification and elegant diction. Waller acknowledges that he adopted Fairfax as his model. The translation of *Ariosto* by Sir John Harrington, godson of Queen Elizabeth, is only worthy of mention as being the first; but that of Guarini's *Pastor Fido* by Sir Richard Fanshawe is admitted to possess poetical

merit. The name of George Sandys is mentioned amongst those who have contributed to the improvement of our versification by his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and his metrical paraphrases of Scripture.

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Notwithstanding the great diversity that distinguishes the writers of this period, both in prose and verse, a certain character of structure and expression, as well as other peculiarities, is common to the whole group. It may also be observed, that in any anadem of poetical beauties that might be formed from the time of Sidney to that of Waller, it would be found that many of them were transplanted from Italian soil. From Tasso, Spenser borrowed some of the most enchanting of his pictures; the melodious canzonets of Guarini are distinctly re-echoed in the songs of Carew; and Milton's predilection for Italian poetry may be everywhere traced in his own. Notwithstanding that his greatest work belongs chronologically to the subsequent period, in Milton the Elizabethan cycle may be considered to return into and complete itself; for his genius was also nourished upon the beauties of the elder poets. The life and writings of Cowley also unite both periods; but as the last of a series, his classification is still more distinctly indicated than that of Milton; while Denham and Waller, on the other hand, as the forerunners of the critical school, are more appropriately associated with the era of the Restoration.

# CHAPTER II.

## AUTHORS AND WORKS.

Spenser—Drayton—Donne—Giles and Phineas Fletcher—Browne—Herrick—Carew—Southwell and others—Cowley—Milton.

### EDMUND SPENSER—1553-1598.

Of Spenser's parentage little is known with certainty; although in several passages of his writings he claims affinity with the titled family that bears his name. He was born in London in 1553, was educated at Cambridge, and there, in 1576, received his degree of M.A. During a residence in the north of England, where he was probably engaged in the capacity of tutor, he composed his pastoral of the *Shepherd's Calendar*, which he dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney. Repairing to London, where his rising fame and the friendship of Sir Philip obtained for him the patronage of the powerful, he was sent on a mission to the Court of France. In 1580, Lord Grey of Wilton having been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he accompanied that nobleman in the capacity of secretary, and returned with him to England in 1582.

In his official capacity, Spenser had displayed those talents for business which are sometimes absurdly assumed to be incompatible with a genius for elegant literature; and, in 1586, his services were acknowledged by a grant of land in the county of Cork, out of the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond. The Castle of Kilcolman, where he resided, was surrounded by lake and mountain; the river Mulla ran through his grounds; and in this romantic situation his time was divided between rural occupations and the composition of his great poem, *The Faerie Queen.* Here he was visited by Sir Walter Raleigh, whom he poetically designates the "Shepherd of the Ocean;" and the interchange of sentiment between these congenial spirits resulted in a friendship which afterwards exercised a beneficial influence on the fortunes of Spenser.

He accompanied Raleigh to London, where in 1590 the first three books of *The Faerie Queen* were published; and, as a tribute to his genius, Elizabeth created him Poet Laureate, besides conferring on him a pension of £50 per annum. Returning to Ireland, he married a young woman of humble birth, whom he celebrates in his *Epithalamion*, one of the most glowing and fanciful of all his effusions. In 1596 he was appointed to the sheriffdom of Cork; but his prosperity was shortly afterwards terminated by a terrible calamity. After the rebellion of Tyrone, which broke out in 1597, the Castle of Kilcolman was set on fire: Spenser and his wife, with two sons, made their escape; but his youngest child, an infant, perished in the flames. This catastrophe is said to have broken his heart; and in 1598 he died in an inn, or lodging-house, in London. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, by the side of Chaucer, his remains being followed to the grave by several of his brother poets, who threw tributary verses into his tomb.

The personal habits and character of Spenser are chiefly to be inferred from what we know of him in his public capacity. In his great moral epic, while vice is portrayed with appalling truthfulness and force, the serene lustre of religion is never obscured by the gloom of bigotry; and it were pleasing to imagine the poet exemplifying in private life those virtues which he inculcates in such a lofty strain, and by such powerfully impressive images. He was, however, an assiduous courtier, and lavishly encomiastic of the great. His complimentary addresses to Elizabeth cannot but be characterized as extravagant adulation; and without the key afforded by the context, no ingenuity could have applied to his idol either the heavenly beauty of "Belphœbe," or the "piteous ruth" of "mild Mercilla." The favour he obtained at Court appears to have excited the jealousy, if not the enmity, of the crafty and unscrupulous Burleigh; and to his evil offices are generally attributed those anxieties and disappointments, in the pursuit of royal and ministerial patronage, to which the poet gives frequent expression in his writings. If his death resulted, as is commonly believed, from the sudden misfortune that befell him, it cannot but be deplored that a genius which resembled that of

Milton in many other respects, was not equally distinguished by the ennobling quality of fortitude.

In Spenser's great poem, *The Faerie Queen*, he gave to the language a new form of versification, which is therefore termed the Spenserian stanza. It is the *ottavarima*, or eight-lined verse of the Italians, with the addition of an Alexandrine. His other poems are, *The Shepherd's Calendar; Colin Clout's Come Home Again; The Tears of the Muses;* &c. His *Epithalamion* is one of the grandest odes in the language. His *Memorial on the State of Ireland*, in which he proposes a remedy for the evils which afflicted that country, is an able work in prose.

### THE FAIRY QUEEN.

*The Fairy Queen* is by Spenser himself termed a "continued allegory or dark conceit," having for its design "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline." The structure of the narrative is based upon the legends of chivalry, the moral virtues being personified under the guise of knights-errant, whose character and adventures are at the same time intended to represent the actors and events of real history. The allegory is thus frequently susceptible of a double interpretation. Gloriana, the Fairy Queen, is at once the type of Glory and the portrait of Queen Elizabeth; while, by a similar blending of the abstract with the historical, the Red-cross Knight symbolizes Holiness and the Church of England. Prince Arthur, upon whose history Spenser professes to have constructed the poem, typifies Magnificence or Magnanimity; and it is chiefly his occasional appearance throughout the various books, of which there are six, that serves to give the narrative a semblance of continuity. Each book is, in fact, a separate poem or epic, devoted, as already observed, to the representation of one of the virtues in the person of a knight. It was the professed intention of the author to extend the poem to twelve books; and, according to one account, the remaining six were lost by the carelessness of a messenger. The prevalent belief, however, is that Spenser wrote no more than what is extant. The first contains the legend of the Red-cross Knight,

or Holiness; the second, of Sir Guyon, or Temperance; and the third, of Britomartis, or Chastity. Of the remaining three, which were not written until after these had been published, and to which they are, upon the whole, inferior in power and interest, Friendship, Justice, and Courtesy, are the themes.

In some respects *The Fairy Queen* may be regarded as forming a link between medieval and modern poetry. It is characterized by the peculiar features of the old Gothic romance, in which Greek and Roman mythology, British legend and Arabian fable, are indiscriminately mingled. The phraseology is designedly cast in an antique mould; and the scenery abounds in dragons, giants, and necromancers; fairy bowers, enchanted palaces, and gorgeous pageantry. But in the pages of Spenser these setting glories are blended with the more brilliant phases of a new era; the spirit of chivalry is graced by refinement and elevated by purity of sentiment; while the capacity of the language as a poetical instrument is illustrated by unwonted melody and variety of expression, by lavish magnificence of description, by the richest devices of invention, and by a system of versification unrivalled for copiousness and harmony.

In a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, Spenser explains the action of the poem to originate with the annual feast of the Fairy Queen, who appoints twelve several adventures to the same number of knights; that of the Red-cross Knight being the release of an ancient King and Queen, (the father and mother of the princess Una,) who had been for many years shut up in a castle by a huge dragon. The first book, accordingly, introduces the Knight, mounted upon his strange courser, "pricking on the plain," and accompanied by Una, who leads "a milk-white lamb," emblem of her own purity and innocence. Overtaken by a storm, their place of shelter is thus described:—

A GROVE.

Enforced to seek some covert nigh at hand,
A shady grove not far away they spied,
That promised aid the tempest to withstand;
Whose lofty trees, yclad with summer's pride,

Did spread so broad, that heaven's light did hide,
Not pierceable with power of any star;
And all within were paths and alleys wide,
With footing worn, and leading inward far:
Fair harbour that them seems;[1] so in they entered are.

And forth they pass, with pleasure forward led,
Joying to hear the birds' sweet harmony,
Which therein shrouded from the tempest dread,
Seemed in their song to scorn the cruel sky.
Much can they praise the trees so straight and high:
The sailing pine; the cedar proud and tall;
The vine-prop elm; the poplar never dry;
The builder oak, sole king of forests all;
The aspen good for staves; the cypress funeral;

The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors,
And poets sage; the fir that weepeth still;
The willow, worn of forlorn paramours;
The yew, obedient to the bender's will;
The birch for shafts; the sallow for the mill;
The myrrh sweet bleeding in the bitter wound;
The warlike beech; the ash for nothing ill;
The fruitful olive; and the platane[2] round;
The carver holme; the maple seldom inward sound.

This pleasing harbour proves to be a labyrinth, which finally conducts them to the Den of Error, the first of that series of allegorical pictures which constitute the wonder and the beauty of the poem. On their escape from this danger, they encounter a venerable sage, with hoary beard and bare feet, who invites them to rest for the night in his hermitage, "hard by a forest's side." They pass the evening in fair discourse; for their new acquaintance, although in reality "a bold bad man," had store of pleasing words, and "well could file his tongue as smooth as glass." The Knight has thus fallen into the snares of Hypocrisy, known in Fairy-land as the enchanter Archimago, one of the most subtle and dangerous enemies of Truth and Holiness. The following verses describe the House of Morpheus, or Sleep, to whom the

[1] That seems to them.

[2] The plane-tree.

enchanter sends one of his spirits to obtain a false dream for the purpose of deluding his guests while they are wrapped in slumber:—

THE HOUSE OF DREAMS.

He,[1] making speedy way through spersed air,
And through the world of waters wide and deep,
To Morpheus' house doth hastily repair.
Amid the bowels of the earth full steep,
And low, where dawning day doth never peep,
His dwelling is; there Tethys his wet bed
Doth ever wash, and Cynthia still doth steep
In silver dew his ever-drooping head,
Whilst sad Night over him her mantle black doth spread.

Whose double gates he findeth locked fast;
The one fair framed of burnished ivory,
The other all with silver overcast;
And wakeful dogs before them far do lie,
Watching to banish Care, their enemy,
Who oft is wont to trouble gentle Sleep.
By them the sprite doth pass in quietly,
And unto Morpheus comes, whom drowned deep
In drowsy fit he finds; of nothing he takes keep.

And more to lull him in his slumber soft,
A trickling stream from high rock tumbling down,
And ever-drizzling rain upon the loft,[2]
Mixed with a murmuring wind, much like the sowne[3]
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swowne.[4]
No other noise, nor people's troublous cries,
As still are wont t' annoy the walléd towne,
Might there be heard; but careless Quiet lies
Wrapt in eternal silence, far from enemies.

By a series of incantations and false visions, Archimago, with the aid of the witch Duessa, the personification of Popery, succeeds in separating the two lovers. The description of the first adventure of Una, in her solitary search after the Knight, is sweetly picturesque:—

UNA AND THE LION.

One day, nigh weary of the irksome way,
From her unhasty beast she did alight,

[1] The sprite. [2] The roof. [3] Sound. [4] Swoon.

And on the grass her dainty limbs did lay
In secret shadow, far from all men's sight;
From her fair head her fillet she undight,
And laid her stole aside: Her angel's face,
As the great eye of heaven, shined bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace.

It fortunéd, out of the thickest wood,
A ramping[1] lion rushéd suddenly,
Hunting full greedy after savage blood:
Soon as the royal virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have at once devoured her tender corse;
But to the prey when as he drew more nigh,
His bloody rage assuagéd with remorse,
And, with the sight amazed, forgot his furious force.

Instead thereof he kissed her weary feet,
And licked her lily hands with fawning tongue,
As he her wronged innocence did weet.[2]
(O how can beauty master the most strong,
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!)
Whose yielded pride and proud submission,
Still dreading death, when she had marked long,
Her heart 'gan melt in great compassion,
And drizzling tears did shed for pure affection.

* * * *

The lion would not leave her desolate,
But with her went along as a strong guard
Of her chaste person, and a faithful mate
Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard.
Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward;
And, when she waked, he waited diligent,
With humble service to her will prepared:
From her fair eyes he took commandément,
And ever by her looks conceivéd her intent.

The Knight is meanwhile seduced by Duessa, who has assumed the likeness of Una, to the sinful House of Pride. The description of Pride and her train is a fine allegory. Seated on a throne, and holding in her hand a mirror in which she delights to view her face, Pride receives her visitors with eyes uplifted to heaven, as disdaining to look so low. Vanity is her usher; and her coach

[1] Pawing furiously. [2] Know; *weet*, the past tense, still in use.

is drawn by "six unequal beasts," each mounted by one of the vices. Conspicuous amongst these are "Sluggish Idleness," the nurse of sin, who rides upon "a slothful ass;" Gluttony, a loathsome and deformed creature, mounted upon a sow; and Envy, who, bestriding a ravenous wolf, inwardly chews his own heart at the sight of others' wealth. Satan himself, seated upon the beam, is the fitting charioteer of proud Lucifera his daughter's team. The following verses describe—

THE HOUSE OF PRIDE.

A stately palace built of squared brick,
Which cunningly was without mortar laid;
Whose walls were high, but nothing strong nor thick,
And golden foil all over them displayed,
That purest sky with brightness they dismayed:
High lifted up were many lofty towers,
And goodly galleries far over laid,
Full of fair windows, and delightful bowers;
And on the top a dial told the timely hours.

It was a goodly heap for to behold,
And spake the praises of the workman's wit;
But full great pity that so fair a mould
Did on so weak foundation ever sit.
For on a sandy hill, that still did flit
And fall away, it mounted was full high,
That every breath of heaven shakéd it;
And all the hinder parts, that few could spy,
Were ruinous and old, but painted cunningly.

* * * *

High above all a cloth of state was spread,
And a rich throne as bright as sunny day;
On which there sat, most brave embellishéd
With royal robes and gorgéous array,
A maiden queen, that shone as Titan's ray,
In glist'ring gold and peerless precious stone;
Yet her bright blazing beauty did assay
To dim the brightness of her glorious throne,
As envying herself, that too exceeding shone.

Una, flying in terror from the pursuit of a fierce pagan Knight, learns that her champion has, under the influence of enchantment,

fallen into the power of the proud giant Orgoglio. She wanders through wood and vale, bewailing her misfortune; and it is at this crisis that Prince Arthur first appears upon the scene. That mighty Paladin and grand archetype of chivalry is thus finely introduced :—

### PRINCE ARTHUR.

At last she chancéd by good hap to meet
A goodly Knight, fair marching by the way,
Together with his squire, arrayéd meet:
His glittering armour shinéd far away,
Like glancing light of Phoebus' brightest ray;
From top to toe no place appearéd bare,
That deadly dint of steel endanger may:
Athwart his breast a baldrick brave he ware,
That shined, like twinkling stars, with stones most precious rare.

And in the midst thereof one precious stone
Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous mights,[1]
Shaped like a lady's head, exceeding shone,
Like Hesperus amongst the lesser lights,
And strove for to amaze the weaker sights:
Thereby his mortal blade[2] full comely hung
In ivory sheath ycarved with curious slights,
Whose hilts were burnish'd gold, and handle strong
Of mother-pearl, and buckled with a golden tongue.

His haughty helmet, horrid[3] all with gold,
Both glorious brightness and great terror bred:
For all the crest a dragon did enfold
With greedy paws, and over all did spread
His golden wings; his dreadful hideous head,
Close couchéd on the beaver,[4] seemed to throw
From flaming mouth bright sparkles fiery red,
That sudden horror to faint hearts did show,
And scaly tail was stretched adown his back full low.

[1] Either as an amulet to avert danger, or possessing magic virtues of a more positive description. The idea belongs to Eastern fable, and is suggestive of the apple of Prince Ahmed and the ring of Aladdin.

[2] *Excalibur*, or *Caliburn*, the sword of Arthur, was in ancient romance a name to conjure withal. The word is said to signify "cut-steel."

[3] *Horrere*, to be rough. *Horrid* seems here to include the primary or etymological signification, as if the helmet were fretted or roughened with the golden ornaments.

[4] The part of a helmet that covers the face.

Upon the top of all his lofty crest,
A bunch of hairs discoloured[1] diversely,
With sprinkled pearl and gold full richly dressed,
Did shake, and seemed to dance for jollity,
Like to an almond tree ymounted high
On top of green Selinis[2] all alone,
With blossoms brave bedeckéd daintily;
Whose tender locks do tremble every one
At every little breath that under heaven is blown.

His warlike shield all closely covered was,
Ne might of mortal eye be ever seen;
Not made of steel, nor of enduring brass,
(Such earthly metals soon consumed been,[3])
But all of diamond perfect, pure, and clean,
It framéd was, one massy, entire mould,
Hewn out of adamant rock with engines keen,
That point of spear it never piercen could,
Ne dint of direful sword divide the substance would.

The same to wight he never wont disclose,
But when as monsters huge he would dismay,
Or daunt unequal armies of his foes,
Or when the flying heavens he would affray:[4]
For so exceeding shone his[5] glistering ray,
That Phoebus' golden face it did attaint,[6]
As when a cloud his beams doth overlay;
And silver Cynthia waxéd pale and faint,[7]
As when her face is stained with magic arts' constraint.

No magic arts hereof[8] had any might,
Nor bloody words of bold enchanter's call;
But all that was not such as seemed in sight
Before that shield did fade, and sudden fall:
And when him list the rascal routs appal,
Men into stones therewith he could transmew,[9]

[1] The prefix in this word is simply expletive.

[2] This would seem to be an inadvertence, as Selinus was a town in Sicily. Warton and Jortin have noticed several instances of a similar kind in Spenser.

[3] Old form of pres. ind., sing. and plur.

[4] Affright.

[5] That is, the shield's. The possessive pronoun *its* was not in use in Spenser's time.

[6] *It did attaint.*—"It seemed to absorb it and put it out by its superior splendour."

[7] The hyperbole of this whole stanza might perhaps be considered too daring, were it forgotten that we are in the region of enchantment.

[8] That is, against the shield.

[9] Transmute.

And stones to dust, and dust to nought at all:
And when him list the prouder looks subdue,
He would them, gazing, blind, or turn to other hue.

The Prince generously undertakes the deliverance of the Red-cross Knight; and a dreadful encounter takes place between him and the giant Orgoglio. The latter is accompanied by the false sorceress, Duessa, in her true guise, mounted on a seven-headed beast, the description of which plainly reveals the allegorical signification of this passage:—

ROME.

Such one it was as that renowned snake,
Which great Alcides in Strymona slew,
Long fostered in the filth of Lerna lake,
Whose many heads out-budding ever new
Did breed him endless labour to subdue.
But this same monster much more ugly was;
For seven great heads out of his body grew!
An iron breast, and back of scaly brass,
And all imbrued in blood, his eyes did shine as glass.

His tail was stretched out in wondrous length,
That to the house of heavenly gods it raught;[1]
And, with extorted power and borrowed strength,
The ever-burning lamps from thence it brought,
And proudly threw to ground as things of naught;
And underneath his filthy feet did tread
The sacred things and holy hests[2] foretaught.
Upon this dreadful beast with sevenfold head
He set the false Duessa, for more awe and dread.

The Prince smites off one of the monster's heads, slays the giant, and, entering his castle, sets the Knight at liberty. The two warriors pledge themselves to mutual friendship; and Arthur, relating his lineage and history, declares his passion for the Fairy Queen, whom he had seen in a dream, and whom he had bound himself by a vow to discover. The next incident introduces the allegory of Despair, one of the most powerfully depicted passages of the poem; but, as a fragmentary extract would fail to show its beauty, we shall conclude the sketch of the First Book with the

[1] Reached. [2] Commands.

description of the chaste and lovely Una on her bridal day. The Knight having, after a desperate combat of three days, slain the dreadful dragon, the royal sire of Una confers on him the guerdon of chivalry :—

UNA ON HER BRIDAL DAY.

Then forth he calléd that his daughter fair,
The fairest Une, his only daughter dear,
His only daughter, and his only heir;
Who forth proceeding with sad sober cheer,
As bright as doth the morning star appear
Out of the east, with flaming locks bedight,
To tell that dawning day is drawing near,
And to the world does bring long-wished light,
So fair and fresh that lady showed herself in sight.

So fair and fresh, as freshest flower in May;
For she had laid her mournful stole aside,
And widow-like sad wimple thrown away,
Wherewith her heavenly beauty she did hide,
Whiles on her weary journey she did ride;
And on her now a garment she did wear,
All lily-white, withouten spot or pride,
That seemed like silk and silver woven near,
But neither silk nor silver therein did appear.

The blazing brightness of her beauty's beam,
And glorious light of her sunshiny face,
To tell, were as to strive against the stream:
My ragged rhymes are all too rude and base,
Her heavenly lineaments for to enchase.[1]
Ne wonder; for her own dear lovéd Knight
All[2] were she daily with himself in place,
Did wonder much at her celestial sight:
Oft had he seen her fair, but never so fair dight.

In the Second Book, which contains the legend of Temperance, the poet has bequeathed to posterity a noble legacy of genius. Here Wisdom, arrayed in her most attractive garb, inculcates sublime precepts and inspires divinely heroic impulses; and here, in a series of intensely impressive visions, are disclosed the mysteries of that fearfully wonderful microcosm, the bodily and spiritual

[1] Adorn. [2] Although she was with him daily.

fabric of man. In a more particular sense than any of the others, this book may be termed an Epic of the Passions, its whole scope being the elevation of human nature by freeing it from their thraldom. The following verses, which form the introduction to the ninth and eleventh cantos, contain the substance of the argument :—

TEMPERANCE AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Of all God's works which do this world adorn,
There is no one more fair and excellent
Than is man's body, both for power and form,
While it is kept in sober government;
But none than it more foul and indecent,
Distempered through misrule and passions base;
It grows a monster, and incontinent
Doth lose his dignity and native grace:
Behold, who list, both one and other in this place.

* * * * *

What war so cruel, or what siege so sore,
As that which strong affections do apply
Against the fort of Reason evermore,
To bring the soul into captivity!
Their force is fiercer through infirmity
Of the frail flesh, relenting to their rage;
And exercise most bitter tyranny
Upon the parts brought into their bondage:
No wretchedness is like to sinful villanage.

But in a body which doth freely yield
His parts to Reason's rule obedient,
And letteth her that ought the sceptre wield,
All happy peace and goodly government
Is settled there in sure establishment.
There Alma, like a Virgin Queen most bright,
Doth flourish in all beauty excellent;
And to her guests doth bounteous banquet dight,
Attempered goodly well for health and for delight.

The mission of Sir Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, is the overthrow of the enchantress Acrasia, who first entices her victims to the Bower of Bliss, and afterwards transforms them into vile and loathsome likenesses. Guyon is guided in his adventures by a sage and hoary palmer (Temperance), his chief dangers being

the temptations by which he is continually beset. Amongst the incidents that test his virtuous fortitude and knightly prowess is his adventure in—

THE ISLAND OF THE IDLE LAKE.

It was a chosen plot of fertile land,
Amongst wide waves set, like a little nest,
As if it had by Nature's cunning hand
Been choicely pickéd out from all the rest,
And laid forth for ensample of the best:
No dainty flower or herb that grows on ground,
No arboret with painted blossoms drest,
And smelling sweet, but there it might be found
To bud out fair, and her sweet smells throw all around.

No tree, whose branches did not bravely spring;
No branch, whereon a fine bird did not sit;
No bird, but did her shrill notes sweetly sing;
No song, but did contain a lovely dit.[1]
Trees, branches, birds, and songs were framéd fit
For to allure frail mind to careless ease. . . . . .

Resisting the blandishments of Mirth, who dwells in this seductive spot, his wanderings lead him where, in a deep glade, he discovers Mammon, who conducts him to—

THE HOUSE OF RICHES.

Before the door sat self-consuming Care,
Day and night keeping wary watch and ward,
For fear lest Force or Fraud should unaware
Break in, and spoil the treasure there in guard:
Ne would he suffer Sleep once thither-ward
Approach, albe his drowsy den were next;
For next to Death is Sleep to be compared;
Therefore his house is unto his annext:
Here Sleep, there Riches, and Hell-gate them both betwixt.

* * * * *

That house's form within was rude and strong,
Like an huge cave hewn out of rocky clift,
From whose rough vault the ragged breaches hung
Embossed with massy gold of glorious gift,
And with rich metal loaded every rift,
That heavy ruin they did seem to threat:

[1] Ditty.

And over them Arachne[1] high did lift
Her cunning web, and spread her subtle net,
Enwrappéd in foul smoke, and clouds more black than jet.

Both roof, and floor, and walls were all of gold,
But overgrown with dust and old decay,
And hid in darkness, that none could behold
The hue thereof: for view of cheerful day
Did never in that house itself display,
But a faint shadow of uncertain light;
Such as a lamp, whose life does fade away;
Or as the moon, clothéd with cloudy night,
Does show to him that walks in fear and sad affright.

In all that room was nothing to be seen
But huge great iron chests and coffers strong,
All barred with double bends, that none could ween
Them to enforce by violence or wrong;
On every side they placéd were along.
But all the ground with skulls was scattered,
And dead men's bones, which round about were flung;
Whose lives, it seeméd, whilome there were shed,
And their vile carcases now left unburiéd.

Mammon, being unable to entice Guyon by the display of his wealth, attempts in vain to overcome his resolution by the offer of his daughter, who displays to mortals worldly power and dignities. She may therefore be termed the Genius of Ambition, which is thus represented in a kind of mixed metaphor :—

AMBITION.

Her face right wondrous fair did seem to be,
That her broad beauty's beam great brightness threw
Through the dim shade, that all men might it see;
Yet was not that same her own native hue,
But wrought by art, and counterfeited shew,
Thereby more lovers unto her to call;
Nathless most heavenly fair in deed and view
She by creation was, till she did fall;
Thenceforth she sought for helps to cloak her crime withal.

There, as in glist'ring glory she did sit,
She held a great gold chain ylinked well,

[1] The Spider.

Whose upper end to highest heaven was knit,
And lower part did reach to lowest hell;
And all that press[1] did round about her swell
To catchen hold of that long chain, thereby
To climb aloft, and others to excel:
That was Ambition, rash desire to sty,[2]
And every link thereof, a step of dignity.

Some thought to raise themselves to high degree
By riches, and unrighteous reward;
Some by close should'ring; some by flattery;
Others through friends; others for base regard;
And all, by wrong ways, for themselves prepared:
Those, that were up themselves, kept others low;
Those, that were low themselves, held others hard,
Ne suffered them to rise, or greater grow;
But every one did strive his fellow down to throw.

Guyon, exhausted by fatigue and severe temptation, falls into a swoon on emerging from the abode of Mammon, and is tended by an angel. This circumstance is introduced by the following beautiful stanzas:—

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

And is there care in heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is:—else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts: but O! th' exceeding grace
Of highest God, that loves his creatures so,
And all his works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels he sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe!

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends, to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward:
O, why should Heavenly God to men have such regard!

[1] Crowd. [2] To climb.

Alma conducts Guyon and Prince Arthur to—

THE CHAMBER OF MEMORY.

That chamber seemèd ruinous and old,
And therefore was removèd far behind;
Yet were the walls, that did the same uphold,
Right firm and strong, though somewhat they declined;
And therein sat an old old man half blind,
And all decrepit in his feeble corse,
Yet lively vigour rested in his mind,
And recompensed them[1] with a better scorse:[2]
Weak body well is changed for mind's redoubled force.

This man of infinite remembrance was,
And things foregone through many ages held,
Which he recorded still as they did pass,
Ne suffered them to perish through long eld,
As all things else the which this world doth weld;[3]
But laid them up in his immortal scrine,[4]
Where they for ever incorrupted dwell'd:
The wars he well remembered of King Nine,
Of old Assaracus, and Inachus divine.

The years of Nestor nothing were to his,
Nor yet Methusalem, though longest liv'd;
For he remembered both their infancies:
Ne wonder then if that he were depriv'd
Of native strength now that he them surviv'd
His chamber all was hang'd about with rolls
And old recórds from ancient times deriv'd;
Some made in books, some in long parchment scrolls,
That were all worm-eaten, and full of canker-holes.

Amidst them all he in a chair was set,
Tossing and turning them withouten end;
But for he was unable them to fett,[5]
A little boy did on him still attend
To reach, whenever he for aught did send.
And oft, when things were lost, or laid amiss,
That boy them sought, and unto him did lend:
Therefore he Anamnestes[6] clepéd is;
And that old man Eumnestes,[7] by their properties.

[1] The visitors of the chamber. [2] Exchange. [3] Wield. [4] Casket.
[5] Fetch. [6] Recollection. [7] Memory.

After a perilous voyage, Guyon arrives at the island of the enchantress Acrasia. The following verses describe—

### THE GARDENS OF BLISS.

There the most dainty paradise on ground
Itself doth offer to his sober eye,
In which all pleasures plenteously abound,
And none does other's happiness envýe;
The painted flowers; the trees upshooting hye;
The dales for shade; the hills for breathing space;
The trembling groves; the crystal running by;
And, that which all fair works doth most aggrace,
The art, which all that wrought, appearéd in no place.

One would have thought (so cunningly the rude
And scornéd parts were mingled with the fine),
That Nature had for wantonness ensude[1]
Art, and that Art at Nature did repine;
So striving each th' other to undermine,
Each did the other's work more beautify;
So diff'ring both in wills agreed in fine:
So all agreed, through sweet diversity,
This garden to adorn with all variety.

And in the midst of all a fountain stood
Of richest substance that on earth might be,
So pure and shiny, that the silver flood
Through every channel running one might see;
Most goodly it with curious imagery
Was over-wrought, and shapes of naked boys,
Of which some seemed with lively jollity
To fly about, playing their wanton toys,
Whilst others did themselves embay[2] in liquid joys.

And over all of purest gold was spread
A trail of ivy in his native hue;
For the rich metal was so colouréd,
That wight, who did not well avis'd[3] it view,
Would surely deem it to be ivy true:
Low his lascivious arms adown did creep,
That themselves dipping in the silver dew,
Their fleecy flowers they fearfully did steep,
Which drops of crystal seemed for wantonness to weep.

[1] Followed. [2] Bathe. [3] *Avise*, to observe or consider.

Infinite streams continally did well
Out of this fountain, sweet and fair to see,
The which into an ample laver fell,
And shortly grew to so great quantity,
That like a little lake it seemed to be;
Whose depth exceeded not three cubits' height,
That through the waves one might the bottom see,
All pav'd beneath with jasper shining bright,
That seemed the fountain in that sea did sail upright.

THE MUSIC OF FAIRYLAND.

Eftsoons they heard a most melodious sound,
Of all that might delight a dainty ear,
Such as at once might not on living ground,
Save in this paradise, be heard elsewhere:
Right hard it was for wight which did it hear,
To read what manner music that might be;
For all that pleasing is to living ear
Was there consorted in one harmony;
Birds, voices, instruments, winds, waters, all agree:

The joyous birds, shrouded in cheerful shade,
Their notes unto the voice attempered sweet;
Th' angelical soft trembling voices made
To th' instruments divine respondence meet;
The silver-sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmur of the waters' fall;
The waters' fall with difference discreet,
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call;
The gentle warbling wind low answeréd to all.

By a stroke of his staff the palmer, at the request of Guyon, restores the captives of Acrasia to their natural form; and the moral which concludes the Second Book is couched in this impressive passage:—

Straightway he with his virtuous staff them struck,
And straight of beasts they comely men became:
Yet, being men, they did unmanly look,
And staréd ghastly; some for inward shame,
And some for wroth to see their captive dame;
But one above the rest in special,
That had an hog been late, hight Gryll by name,
Repinéd greatly, and did him miscall,
That had from hoggish form him brought to natural.

Said Guyon; "See the mind of beastly man,
That hath so soon forgot the excellence
Of his creation, when he life began,
That now he chooseth with vile difference
To be a beast and lack intelligence?"
To whom the palmer thus; "The dunghill kind
Delights in filth and foul incontinence:
Let Gryll be Gryll, and have his hoggish mind;
But let us hence depart, whilst weather serves and wind."

The following beautiful and highly coloured passage is extracted from the Mask of Cupid, in which the Passions are personified:—

DOUBT, DANGER, AND FEAR.

BOOK III. CANTO XII.

Next after him went Doubt, who was yclad
In a discolour'd[1] coat of strange disguise,
That at his back a broad capuccio[2] had,
And sleeves dependent Albanesé-wise:
He looked askew with his mistrustful eyes,
And nicely trode, as thorns lay in his way,
Or that the floor to shrink he did avise;
And on a broken reed he still did stay
His feeble steps, which shrunk, when hard thereon he lay.

With him went Danger cloth'd in ragged weed,
Made of bear's skin, that him more dreadful made;
Yet his own face was dreadful, ne did need
Strange horror to deform his grisly shade:
A net in th' one hand and a rusty blade
In th' other was; this Mischief, that Mishap;
With th' one his foes he threatened to invade,
With th' other he his friends meant to enwrap:
For whom he could not kill he practis'd to entrap.

Next him was Fear, all arm'd from top to toe,
Yet thought himself not safe enough thereby,
But fear'd each shadow moving to or fro;
And his own arms[3] when glittering he did spy,

[1] See Note 1, p. 112.
[2] A cowl: this word is pure Italian.
[3] Compare with Collins.

Or clashing heard, he fast away did fly,
As ashes pale of hue, and winged heeled;
And evermore on Danger fix'd his eye,
'Gainst whom he always bent a brazen shield,
Which his right hand unarméd fearfully did wield.

Dr. Aikin, in his preface to the *Fairy Queen*, observes that Spenser's allegories are threefold; namely, those which are merely the natural representations of a human being under the influence of the passion or quality personified; those which are wholly emblematical, expressing their character by types and symbols; and those in which both of these modes of painting are combined. An example of the first or natural mode is given in the preceding extract; of the second, or emblematical, in that which now follows, taken from the First Book; and of the third, or mixed mode, in the description of Pride, already quoted.

### FAITH AND HOPE.

BOOK I. CANTO X.

Thus as they 'gan of sundry things devise,
Lo! two most goodly virgins came in place,
Ylinked arm in arm in lovely wise;
With countenance demure, and modest grace,
They numbered even steps, and equal pace:
Of which the eldest, that Fidelia hight,
Like[1] sunny beams threw from her crystal pace,
That could have daz'd the rash beholder's sight,
And round about her head did shine like heaven's light.

She was arrayéd all in lily white,
And in her right hand bore a cup of gold,
With wine and water filled up to the height,
In which a serpent did himself enfold,
That horror made to all that did behold;
But she no whit did change her constant mood:
And in her other hand she fast did hold
A book, that was both signed and sealed with blood;
Wherein dark things were writ, hard to be understood.

Her younger sister, that Speranza hight,
Was clad in blue, that her beseemed well.

[1] Such or similar.

Not all so cheerful seeméd she of sight,
As was her sister; whether dread did dwell,
Or anguish in her heart, is hard to tell:
Upon her arm a silver anchor lay,
Whereon she leanéd ever, as befell;
And ever up to heaven, as she did pray,
Her steadfast eyes were bent, ne swerved other way.

## MICHAEL DRAYTON—1563–1631.

Michael Drayton was born at Atherstone in Warwickshire in 1563. His precocity of talent procured him the patronage of a gentleman, who appointed him his page, and at whose expense he was educated. On the accession of James I. to the English throne, Drayton presented him with congratulatory verses; which, however, were but coldly received. In the reign of Charles I. he was called poet laureate; but it is doubted whether he really held that appointment, the title being then often conferred merely as a compliment. His principal works are the *Polyolbion*, the *Barons' Wars*, and *Nymphidia*, besides pastorals. The first of these is a minute topographical account of England, in Alexandrine verse, displaying an inexhaustible knowledge of the natural features, animate and inanimate, of his varied picture, which are all viewed with the poet's eye; and an equal familiarity with the whole circle of rural pursuits and pastimes. It abounds in legendary and historical illustration, and contains many fine descriptive passages. In some portions of the *Barons' Wars* there is a strength of imagination not far removed from the grandeur of the epic; and *Nymphidia* is a frolic of elfin fancy that might have emanated from the laureate of Queen Mab. The pastorals of Drayton "sparkle with elegant imagery."

### DESCRIPTION OF PIGWIGGEN, A PRINCE OF FAIRY-LAND.

FROM "NYMPHIDIA, THE COURT OF FAIRY."

He quickly arms him for the field,
A little cockle shell his shield,
Which he could very bravely wield,
Yet could it not be pierced:

His spear a bent [1] both stiff and strong,
And well near of two inches long;
The pill [2] was of a horse-fly's tongue,
Whose sharpness nought reversed.

And puts him on a coat of mail,
Which was of a fish's scale,
That, when his foe should him assail,
No point should be prevailing;
His rapier was a hornet's sting,
It was a very dangerous thing;
For if he chanced to hurt the king,
It would be long in healing.

His helmet was a beetle's head,
So horrible and full of dread,
That able was to strike one dead,
Yet it did well become him;
And for a plume a horse's hair,
Which being tossèd by the air,
Had force to strike his foe with fear,
And turn his weapon from him.

Himself he on an earwig set,
Yet scarce he on his back could get,
So oft and high he did curvet,
Ere he himself could settle:
He made him turn, and stop, and bound,
To gallop, and to trot the round,
He scarce could stand on any ground,
He was so full of mettle.

### DR. DONNE—1573-1631.

John Donne, born in London of a good family in 1573, was distinguished for scholarship at an early age. Having entered into holy orders at the express request of James I., he was appointed chaplain to the King and dean of St. Paul's. He died in 1631. His reputation as a poet stood high in his own time; and it is now generally admitted that his works, which embrace satires, epistles, epigrams, and occasional poems, possess merit which ought to have preserved them from the neglect into which

[1] A rush. [2] Point; from Lat. *pilum*, a javelin.

they fell for more than a century. He is generally regarded as the founder of the Metaphysical School; but notwithstanding his unbounded license in quaint conceit, he possessed a rich vein of poetry; a wit piercing and yet playful; and a vigorous, though not a lofty imagination. His keen and acute intellect is said to have mastered all the learning of his age; and Dryden conferred on him the praise of being the greatest of English wits. The religious pieces which he composed in the latter part of his life breathe a strain of fervent devotion. The ruggedness that characterized much of his versification is most conspicuous in his satires. The life of Donne was diversified by several interesting and romantic incidents; and his biography was written by his friend and enthusiastic admirer, the celebrated Isaac Walton.

### THE WILL.

Before I sigh my last gasp, let me breathe,
Great Love! some legacies: I here bequeath
Mine eyes to Argus, if mine eyes can see;
If they be blind, then, Love, I give them thee!
My tongue to fame; t' ambassadors mine ears;
To women, or the sea, my tears.
Thou, Love, hast taught me heretofore,
By making me love her who had twenty more,
That I should give to none, but such as had too much before.

My constancy I to the planets give;
My truth to them who at the court do live;
Mine ingenuity and openness
To Jesuits; to buffoons my pensiveness;
My silence to any who abroad have been;
My money to a Capuchin.
Thou, Love! taught'st me, by appointing me
To love there, where no love received can be,
Only to give to such as have no good capacity.

My faith I give to Roman Catholics;
All my good works unto the schismatics
Of Amsterdam; my best civility
And courtship to an university;
My modesty I give to soldiers bare;
My patience let gamesters share.

Thou, Love! taught'st me, by making me
Love her that holds my love disparity,
Only to give to those that count my gifts indignity.

I give my reputation to those
Which were my friends; mine industry to foes;
To schoolmen I bequeath my doubtfulness;
My sickness to physicians, or excess;
To nature, all that I in rhyme have writ;
And to my company, my wit.
Thou, Love! by making me adore
Her who begot this love in me before,
Taught'st me to make as though I gave, when I do but restore.

To him, for whom the passing-bell next tolls,
I give my physic books; my written rolls
Of moral counsels, I to Bedlam give;
My brazen medals unto them which live
In want of bread; to them which pass among
All foreigners, mine English tongue.
Thou, Love! by making me love one
Who thinks her friendship a fit portion
For younger lovers, dost my gifts thus disproportion.

Therefore I'll give no more, but I'll undo
The world by dying; because love dies too.
Then all your beauties will be no more worth
Than gold in mines, where none doth draw it forth;
And all your graces no more use shall have
Than a sun-dial in a grave.
Thou, Love! taught'st me, by making me
Love her who doth neglect both me and thee,
T' invent and practise this one way, t' annihilate all three.

## GILES AND PHINEAS FLETCHER.

Giles and Phineas Fletcher were the sons of Dr. Giles Fletcher, Ambassador to Russia in the reign of Elizabeth, and cousins to John Fletcher the dramatist. Both were clergymen, and were educated at Cambridge. Giles was born about 1580, and died in 1623; Phineas was about four years younger, and died in 1660. Their works have been alluded to in the introduction to this section.

## PHINEAS FLETCHER.

### DESCRIPTION OF PARTHENIA, OR CHASTITY.
### FROM "THE PURPLE ISLAND."

With her, her sister went, a warlike maid,
Parthenia, all in steel, and gilded arms;
In needle's stead, a mighty spear she swayed,
With which in bloody fields and fierce alarms
The boldest champion she down would bear,
And like a thunder-bolt wide passage tear,
Flinging all to the earth with her enchanted spear.

Her goodly armour seemed a garden green,
Where thousand spotless lilies freshly blew;
And on her shield the lone bird might be seen,
Th' Arabian bird,[1] shining in colours new:
Itself unto itself was only mate;
Ever the same, but new in newer date:
And underneath was writ, "Such is chaste single state."

Thus hid in arms, she seemed a goodly knight,
And fit for any warlike exercise;
But when she list lay down her armour bright,
And back resume her peaceful maiden's guise,
The fairest maid she was that ever yet
Prisoned her locks within a golden net,
Or let them waving hang, with roses fair beset.

Choice nymph! the crown of chaste Diana's train;
Thou Beauty's lily, set in heavenly earth;
Thy fairs[2] unpatterned, all perfection stain:[3]
Sure Heaven with curious pencil at thy birth
In thy rare face her own full picture drew:
It is a strong verse here to write, but true,
Hyperboles in others are but half thy due.

Upon her forehead Love his trophies fits,
A thousand spoils in silver arch displaying;
And in the midst himself all proudly sits,
Himself in awful majesty arraying:
Upon her brows lies his bent ebon bow,
And ready shafts: deadly those weapons show:
Yet sweet that death appeared, lovely that deadly blow.

[1] The Phœnix. [2] Charms. [3] Eclipse.

### WILLIAM BROWNE—1590-1645.

This writer was born at Tavistock in Devonshire, and was a student of the Inner Temple. His principal works are *Britannia's Pastorals*, a combination of beautiful landscapes and Spenserian allegory; and *The Inner Temple Masque*, of a loftier cast of imagination and more perfect as a work of art. Browne had merit sufficient to be closely imitated by Milton in some parts of *Lycidas* and *L'Allegro*, if not also in *Comus*.

#### A STREAM.

FROM "BRITANNIA'S PASTORALS."

As I have seen upon a bridal day
Full many maids, clad in their best array,
In honour of the bride come with their flaskets
Filled full with flowers; others in wicker baskets
Bring from the marish, rushes to o'erspread
The ground whereon to church the lovers tread,
Whilst that the quaintest[1] youth of all the plain
Ushers their way with many a piping strain:
So, as in joy at this fair river's birth,
Triton came upon a channel with his mirth,
And called the neighb'ring nymphs, each in her turn,
To pour their pretty rivulets from their urn,
To wait upon this new-delivered spring.
Some, running through the meadows, with them bring
Cowslips and mint; and 'tis another's lot
To light upon some gardener's curious knot,
Whence she upon her breast (love's sweet repose)
Doth bring the queen of flowers, the English rose;
Some from the fen bring reeds, wild thyme from downs;
Some from the grove the bay, that poet crowns;
One from an aged rock the moss hath torn,
And leaves him naked unto winter's storm
Another from her banks, in mere good will,
Brings nutriment for fish, the camomile.
Thus all bring somewhat, and do overspread
The way the spring unto the sea doth tread.

### ROBERT HERRICK—1591-1674.

Robert Herrick, the son of a goldsmith, was born at Cheapside in London. He studied at the University of Cambridge, and

[1] Neatest.

was for twenty years vicar of Dean Prior in Devonshire, from which he was ejected by Cromwell; but he was reinstated after the Restoration. The fervour with which he commemorates his festivities with Ben Jonson and other choice spirits at "The Sun, the Dog, the Triple Tun," shows that with the cessation of his clerical duties he had for the time entirely divested himself of the clerical character. The quaint title[1] with which he published his poems partly indicates that incongruous conjunction of sacred and amatory themes which is also a peculiarity of the works of Donne. Herrick claims a distinguished place amongst the older lyrists for the dewy freshness of his imagery and the graceful simplicity of his diction.

### GATHER YE ROSE-BUDS.

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But, being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

### CHERRY RIPE.

Cherry ripe, ripe, ripe, I cry,
Full and fair ones—come and buy;
If so be you ask me where
They do grow? I answer: There,

[1] Hesperides; or, The Works, both Human and Divine, of Robert Herrick, Esq.

Where my Julia's lips do smile,
There's the land, or cherry isle;
Whose plantations fully show
All the year where cherries grow.

### THOMAS CAREW—1589-1639.

Thomas Carew was descended from an ancient family in Gloucestershire, was educated at Oxford, and attached himself to the Court of Charles I. At that monarch's request he wrote the masque called *Cœlum Britannicum;* which, although not the piece by which he is best known, undoubtedly proves his genius to have been capable of much higher efforts than even the best of his other pieces. Campbell ranks him as "among the earliest of those who gave a cultivated grace to our lyric strains."

#### SONG.

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauties' orient deep,
These flow'rs, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For, in pure love, Heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale, when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters, and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars light,
That downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixed become, as in their sphere.

Ask me no more, if east or west,
The Phœnix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

### MINOR POETS.

Robert Southwell (1560–1595) wrote poems of a serious and reflective cast; among the best known of which are those entitled, *Scorn not the Least*, and *Time Goes by Turns*. Samuel Daniel (1562–1619) was the author of numerous epistles, sonnets, and masques. The *History of the Civil Wars* is his largest poem. William Drummond of Hawthornden near Edinburgh (1585–1649) was regarded by Southey as the first Scottish poet who wrote well in English, and Hazlitt considers his sonnets the finest in the language. His *River Forth Feasting*, which is in the style of Spenser, was admired by Ben Jonson; and Milton did not disdain to borrow hints from some of his minor poems. The poetry of George Wither (1588–1667) was long neglected or ridiculed, and in the *Dunciad* Pope terms him "wretched Withers;" but the decision of the great satirist has been reversed by a more recent posterity. During his confinement in Marshalsea prison for the publication of a volume of satires, entitled *Abuses Whipt and Stript*, he wrote what is esteemed the best of his pieces, *The Shepherd's Hunting*, which contains a passage of remarkable eloquence and pastoral sweetness, descriptive of the consolation afforded him by poetry and his muse. The devotional spirit that pervades the works of Francis Quarles (1592–1644) caused them to be neglected at the Restoration; but modern criticism has found him worthy of being rescued from oblivion. His excessive quaintness, particularly in the *Divine Emblems*, pre-eminently marks him as a disciple of Donne; but his best pieces prove that he could excel in a more simple and natural style. George Herbert (1593–1632) was the author of a volume entitled *The Temple, or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations*. The following is considered the best piece in the collection:—

#### VIRTUE.

Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright!
The bridal of the earth and sky!
The dews shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose! whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye!
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring! full of sweet days and roses!
A box where sweets compacted lie!
Thy music shows you have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives,
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

Richard Crashaw (d. 1650) was a highly accomplished scholar. His pieces, entitled *Steps to the Temple* and *The Delights of the Muses*, are for the most part inspired by a strong spirit of religious enthusiasm, and display rich fancy and invention. His poetical genius, however, shines most in translation, scarcely one of his original effusions being free from the exaggerations and absurdities of the metaphysical school. He was one of the masters of versification. The poems of Sir John Suckling (1608–1641) are unmatched for liveliness and a pervading spirit of rich and spontaneous wit, besides a felicitous adaptation of homely figures and phraseology. Under the title of *Lucasta's Odes, Sonnets, Songs, &c.*, Richard Lovelace (1618–1658) published a volume of poems which resemble those of Carew in style and turn of sentiment. Sir William Davenant (1605–1668) was the successor of Ben Jonson as poet-laureate, and author of *Gondibert*, a poem greatly esteemed by the critics of his time. John Cleveland (1613–1658) wrote in the cause of royalty against the Parliamentarians. He was a wit of the frigid metaphysical school; but in a satire upon the Scotch, Dryden awards praise to the following couplet:—

Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his doom;
Not forced him wander, but confined him home.[1]

*Pharonnida*, a heroic poem by William Chamberlayne (1619–1689), abounds in beautiful descriptions, and has been highly

[1] This may have suggested one of Dr. Johnson's characteristic sayings, that the finest prospect in Scotland was the high road to London.

praised by Campbell. The devotional pieces of HENRY VAUGHAN (1621–1695) have, by recent critics, been deemed worthy of redemption from obscurity.

### ABRAHAM COWLEY—1618-1667.

Abraham Cowley, the son of a grocer in London, was born there in 1618. His mother, who was left a widow before the birth of her son, procured his admission to Westminster School as a King's Scholar; and his education was completed at Trinity College, Cambridge. Cowley's poetical precocity, like that of Pope and Chatterton, is one of the wonders of literature. When thirteen years old he published a volume of poems, part of which had been composed when he was only ten. Having early obtained the notice of some of the royalist leaders during the civil war, he attached himself to the King's party; and in the capacity of secretary to Lord Jermyn, accompanied Queen Henrietta to France, by whom he was employed in deciphering the correspondence carried on between her and the King. In 1656 he returned to England, and falling under the suspicion of Cromwell's government as to the object of his visit, he was imprisoned, but released on bail. His acquiescence in the government of the Protector, and his abstinence from public life, were afterwards made the ground of an accusation of disloyalty against him; and his expectations of reward for his long services in the cause of royalty were bitterly disappointed. He had been promised the Mastership of the Savoy, but his claims were neglected; and he had also the mortification of finding that his complaints only furnished a subject of merriment for the courtiers. He retired in discontent to Chertsey in Surrey, and shortly afterwards, through the influence of the Earl of St. Albans, his former employer, obtained a lease of the Queen's lands, which afforded him an income of £300 a year. He died at his country seat in 1667, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, leaving behind him a memory cherished for modesty of deportment and amiability of disposition. King Charles, on hearing of his death, declared that he had not left a better man behind him.

Cowley, who has been already mentioned as "the last and best of the metaphysical poets," enjoyed in his own lifetime a reputation which did not even survive some of his contemporaries. Dryden, who entered on his poetical career under the influence of his example, was afterwards the first critically to expose and condemn the vices of the school of conceit, and to say *Amen* to the oblivion which had already buried the fame of Cowley. The brilliance of many passages in his poems proves how much he defrauded his genius by adapting it to the conventional standard that Donne had rendered fashionable; and the direct simplicity of his prose presents a striking contrast to the artificial and unnatural style of his poetry. He ranks high among the learned poets. Having studied medicine on his return from France, he wrote a Latin poem in six books on the properties of plants; and his devotedness to the poetry of the ancients is evinced by his *Pindaric Odes*, and by his *Anacreontics*, verses paraphrastically translated out of Anacreon. His other works consist chiefly of *Miscellanies*, comprising a few of his best pieces; the *Mistress*, a collection of love poems, inspired by an imaginary and fictitious passion; and four books of the *Davideis*, an epic poem founded on the history of King David, which was left unfinished, but which has served no better purpose than to display the vast erudition of its author. His essays and notes contain much judicious and valuable criticism; and an eminent writer has said of him, that "he was one of those who freed translation from servility, and instead of following his author at a distance, walked at his side." The enthusiastic eulogy of Cowley by his contemporary Denham affords one of the best examples of that author's own style.

## THE MOTTO.

"—Tentanda via est, quâ me quoque possim
Tollere humo, victorque virûm volitare per ora."
VIRG. *Georg.* III. 8.

What shall I do to be for ever known,
And make the age to come my own?
I shall, like beasts or common people, die,
Unless you write my elegy;
Whilst others great, by being born, are grown;
Their mothers' labour, not their own.
In this scale gold, in th' other fame does lie,
The weight of that mounts this so high.
These men are Fortune's jewels, moulded bright;
Brought forth with their own fire and light:
If I, her vulgar stone, for either look,
Out of myself it must be strook.
Yet I must on. What sound is't strikes mine ear?
Sure I Fame's trumpet hear:
It sounds like the last trumpet; for it can
Raise up the buried man.
Unpast Alps stop me; but I'll cut them all,
And march, the Muses' Hannibal.
Hence, all the flattering vanities that lay
Nets of roses in the way!
Hence, the desire of honours or estate,
And all that is not above Fate!
Hence, Love himself, that tyrant of my days,
Which intercepts my coming praise.
Come, my best friends, my books, and lead me on;
'Tis time that I were gone.
Welcome, great Stagyrite! and teach me now
All I was born to know:
Thy scholar's victories thou dost far out-do;
He conquered th' earth, the whole world you.
Welcome, learn'd Cicero! whose blest tongue and wit
Preserves Rome's greatness yet:
Thou art the first of orators; only he
Who best can praise thee, next must be.
Welcome, the Mantuan Swan, Virgil the wise!
Whose verse walks highest, but not flies;
Who brought green Poesy to her perfect age,
And made that art which was a rage.
Tell me, ye mighty Three! what shall I do
To be like one of you?

But you have climbed the mountain's top, there sit
On the calm flourishing head of it,
And, whilst with wearied steps we upwards go,
See us, and clouds below.

FROM THE HYMN TO LIGHT.

Say, from what golden quivers of the sky
Do all thy winged arrows fly?
Swiftness and Power by birth are thine;
From thy great sire they came, thy sire, the Word Divine.

* * * * *

Thou in the moon's bright chariot, proud and gay,
Dost thy bright wood of stars survey;
And all the year dost with thee bring
Of thousand flowery lights thine own nocturnal spring.

Thou, Scythian-like, dost round thy lands above
The sun's gilt tent for ever move;
And still, as thou in pomp dost go,
The shining pageants of the world attend thy show.

Nor amidst all these triumphs dost thou scorn
The humble glow-worms to adorn,
And with those living spangles gild
(O greatness without pride!) the bushes of the field.

Night and her ugly subjects thou dost fright,
And Sleep, the lazy owl of night;
Ashamed, and fearful to appear,
They screen their horrid shapes with the black hemisphere.

With them there hastes, and wildly takes th' alarm,
Of painted dreams a busy swarm;
At the first opening of thine eye
The various clusters break, the antic atoms fly.

* * * * *

The guilty serpents, and obscener beasts,
Creep conscious to their secret rests;
Nature to thee does rev'rence pay;
Ill omens and ill sights remove out of thy way.

At thy appearance, Grief itself is said
To shake his wings, and rouse his head;
And cloudy Care has often took
A gentle beamy smile reflected from thy look.

* * * * *

When, Goddess! thou lift'st up thy wakened head
Out of the morning's purple bed,
Thy choir of birds about thee play,
And all the joyful world salutes the rising day.

All the world's brav'ry, that delights our eyes,
Is but thy sev'ral liveries;
Thou the rich dye on them bestow'st,
Thy nimble pencil paints this landscape as thou go'st.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st;
A crown of studded gold thou bear'st;
The virgin lilies in their white
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light.

The violet, Spring's little infant, stands
Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands:
On the fair tulip thou dost doat;
Thou cloth'st it in a gay and party-coloured coat.

With flame condensed thou dost the jewels fix,
And solid colours in it mix:
Flora herself envies to see
Flowers fairer than her own, and durable as she.

* * * * *

Through the soft ways of heav'n, and air, and sea,
Which open all their pores to thee,
Like a clear river thou dost glide,
And with thy living stream through the close channels slide.

* * * *

But the vast ocean of unbounded day
In th' empyrean heaven does stay;
Thy rivers, lakes, and springs, below,
From thence took first their rise, thither at last must flow.

### JOHN MILTON,—1608-1674.

London may justly claim the honour of being regarded as the cradle of the British poets. Of the four greatest, she can boast of Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton; and besides many others, of Jonson, Ford, Webster, and Shirley; of Donne, Crashaw, Herrick, and Cowley; of Pope and Gray, Byron and Keats. We offer no apology for making this interesting fact the occasion of connecting the name of Milton with the brilliant group among which his genius shines with such imposing lustre.

The father of Milton was a scrivener in London, who had

acquired sufficient means to afford his son every advantage of education and of leisure for the uninterrupted pursuit of study.

Leaving St. Paul's School at the age of fifteen, Milton entered Christ's College at Cambridge, where he speedily attained excellence in the composition of Latin verse. From Cambridge he retired to his father's house at Horton in Buckinghamshire, where he devoted himself for five years to the reading of the Greek and Roman authors, and is supposed to have, during the same period, written *Comus*, *Lycidas*, and other minor pieces. In 1637 he travelled into Italy, and made the acquaintance of Galileo, Grotius, and other distinguished foreigners of the time. It was his intention to have visited Sicily and Greece; but his strong political feelings recalled him to his native country, when the struggle in which he was to bear so important a part appeared imminent. In 1644 he wrote his celebrated defence of the freedom of the press, entitled *Areopagitica*, which had been preceded by various of his powerful tracts in favour of political and religious liberty; and in 1649 he was appointed Latin Secretary to Oliver Cromwell and the Parliament. It was not long before the value of his services was put to the test. He was employed to reply to the *Ikon Basilike*;[1] and in his controversy with Salmasius in the Latin language, on the divine right of kings, he excited the admiration of Europe by the depth of his learning and the commanding power of his eloquence.

On the Restoration, Milton, to use his own expression, fell on evil days. He was forced to conceal himself till the passing of the Act of Indemnity in 1660; and at a time when the *debonair* Charles was digging up the bodies of Cromwell and May, and witnessing from his palace window the evisceration of Harrison, it must be allowed that the republican secretary, the merciless breaker of royal images, was treated with marvellous lenity. He was mulcted in a ruinous fine; and five years afterwards, at a cottage at Chalfont, in Bucks, whither he had retired on account of the plague, he completed his great epic, which was begun in 1658, and which had been germinating in his mind from the

[1] See notice of John Gauden, p. 213.

time of his Italian travels. About the year 1652 he had lost his sight; and it is by no means improbable that literature has benefited by this calamity, to which in his noble poem he expressly alludes as an incentive to his great undertaking. *Samson Agonistes* and *Paradise Regained* were produced in 1671.

Milton, who had been thrice married, was survived by his last wife, and by three daughters. He had in his youth been remarkable for the beauty of his person; and in the moral and intellectual dignity of his character he was an exemplar of the lofty precepts inculcated in his writings. He expired at his house in Bunhill Fields in 1674, and was interred in the chancel of St. Giles, Cripplegate. In 1737 a monument was erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey.

Some of Milton's minor pieces, written in his youth, stand in the highest rank as models of imaginative beauty and classical purity of taste. Hallam, who is disposed to regard the *Ode on the Nativity* as the finest in the language, adds the weight of his sanction to the proposition that *Lycidas* is a good test for the discovery of a true feeling for poetry; and of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* Macaulay says, "that it is impossible to conceive the mechanism of language to be wrought to a more exquisite degree of perfection." But it is in his great epic, the production of his maturer years, that we must look for those elements of sublimity and power, for that union of loftiness of thought with majesty of style, which Dryden, in his celebrated eulogy, pronounced the united genius of Homer and Virgil requisite to equal. Viewed with reference to his contemporaries, the isolated character of Milton's genius appears as much in the form as in the subject of that poem. The licentious and scurrilous verses of such writers as Rochester, Sedley, and Buckingham, were in supreme vogue with both town and court; and blank verse, which had formerly been confined to dramatic poetry, was even in that species of composition about to be superseded for a time by the introduction of the rhyming or heroic tragedy. But Milton, equally disdaining the taste and the morality of the time, adopted blank verse as the medium best fitted to sustain the dignity of his theme; and he

has wielded that measure with unapproachable mastery. For a full analysis of the *Paradise Lost*, we must refer to Addison's criticism in the *Spectator*, to Johnson in his life of Milton, to Hazlitt, Campbell, Hallam, Channing, and Macaulay. We shall only indicate a few of those characteristics of his poetry which we conceive it to be useful to bring under the notice of the student: his immense erudition, as evinced by his familiarity with ancient and modern authors—with Homer and Virgil, Dante, Ariosto, Tasso, and all the Italian poets, as well as every writer who had penned a verse in the English language; his frequent use of idioms derived from foreign sources, whereby elevation of expression was attained without affecting the purity of his English; his unlimited command of appropriate and melodious epithet; the sublimity of his imagination and the grandeur of his imagery; and his inexhaustible affluence of illustration, derived from all the treasures of poetry, sacred and profane. Milton is the most learned of all the British poets.

As the *Paradise Lost* is in very general use as a text-book, it will be sufficient to indicate without quotation some of the most esteemed and characteristic passages:—in Book I., the Invocation and Introduction, the Speech of Satan to Beelzebub, and the Catalogue of the Fallen Angels; Book II., the Speech of Belial, and Satan, Sin, and Death at the gate of Hell; Book III., the Address to Light, and the Adoration of the Angels; Book IV., Satan's Address to the Sun, and Evening in Paradise; Book V., Adam and Eve's Morning Hymn; Book VI., Expulsion of the Rebel Angels from Paradise; Book X., the Transformation of Satan and the Rebel Angels into Serpents.

FROM COMUS.

*Song by the Lady who has lost her brothers in the wood.*

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;

Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair[1]
That likest thy Narcissus are?
Oh! if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies.

COMUS, *who has been listening to the song.*

Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence:
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circe, with the Syrens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause;
Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,
And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now.

*Conclusion of Epilogue by the attendant Spirit.*

Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue; she alone is free:
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

## L'ALLEGRO.

Hence, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!

[1] The lady's brothers.

Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven ycleped Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore.

* * * *

Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fant'stic toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty:
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull Night
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill;
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,

Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight,
While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landskip round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holy-day,
Till the livelong daylight fail;
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Fairy Mab the junkets eat;
She was pinched, and pulled, she said,
And he by friars' lantern led;
Tells how the drudging Goblin sweat
To earn his cream bowl duly set,

When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal Verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton Heed, and giddy Cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumbers on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

## IL PENSEROSO.

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bestead,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners[1] of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen[2] that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore.

* * * *

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cyprus[3] lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes;
There held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,

[1] Attendants.
[2] Cassiopeia, the fabulous Queen of Ethiopia, and the name of a constellation.
[3] "Cyprus is a thin transparent texture."— *Warton.*

And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er the accustomed oak:
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chantress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth shaven green,
To behold the wandering Moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar:
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:

And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometimes let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower;
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did seek!
Or call up him[1] that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung
Of tourneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not trick'd and frounc'd[2] as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And, when the Sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan[3] loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke,

[1] Chaucer, in "The Squire's Tale," which is incomplete.
[2] Curled. [3] The wood-deity.

Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,[1]
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep ;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid:
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortal's good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
  But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim, religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced quire below
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
  And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth show,
And every herb that sips the dew ;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
  These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

[1] *i.e.*, The bees and the waters.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE DRAMA.

Introduction—Miracle Plays or Mysteries—Moral Plays—Heywood's Interludes—Nicolas Udall—Bishop Still—First English Tragedy—Elizabethan Drama.

THE earliest form of dramatic representation in this country is to be found in a species of composition termed *Miracle Plays or Mysteries*, at first both written and enacted by ecclesiastics, and having for their object the instruction of the people in Scripture history. They were founded on the most important events narrated in the Old and New Testaments, such as the Creation, the Flood, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Saviour, as well as the legends of Saints and Martyrs. In accordance with their professed object, the exhibition of these pieces at first took place in the churches; but latterly they were more frequently given in streets and other public places, on scaffolds of two or more stories in height. It would seem to have been the tendency to regard these plays rather as a source of entertainment than as a means of religious edification; for in many of them sacred narrative is so treated, that they now appear grotesque and profane. But even in those specimens wherein coarseness and buffoonery are most rampant, these features must rather be regarded as illustrations of the rudeness of the times than as indicating any intention on the part of the writers, whether secular or clerical, to treat sacred subjects with irreverence. So far as recorded, the first representation of a Miracle Play in England took place in Dunstable, in 1119; and they continued to be performed at most of the large towns during religious festivals until the time of Henry VI.[1]

About the period just mentioned, Miracle Plays were superseded by Moral Plays, a species of representation approaching more

[1] The exhibition of Miracle Plays was continued at Chester until the middle of the sixteenth century.

nearly to the modern drama. "A Moral, or Moral Play, is a drama, the characters of which are allegorical, abstract, or symbolical, and the story of which is intended to convey a lesson for the better conduct of human life." In these pieces, the contest between good and evil in the human soul is shown forth in a kind of pageant, exhibiting the various passions and propensities in appropriate guise; but the most characteristic personages in the Moral Plays, and those that afforded the greatest amusement, were the Devil and the Vice. The latter, arrayed in grotesque costume, and armed with a wooden sword or dagger, and sometimes with a flapper, was the prototype of the Fool or Jester of the Shakspearian drama, and seems chiefly to have been employed in belabouring the Devil, who generally appeared in regal horns, long beard, and hairy vest. That some of these pieces afforded hints to Spenser and Milton, there can be little doubt. In the Moral named *The Castle of Perseverance*, the allegory is almost identical with that of the second book of the *Fairy Queen*, where the Castle of Alma is besieged by the Passions; and in that of the *Mind, Will, and Understanding*, the transformation of the soul into a horrible fiend is accompanied by the same circumstances that constitute the sublime and striking picture of Sin at the gates of Hell, in the second book of *Paradise Lost*.

The Interludes of John Heywood, composed about the time of Henry VIII., in which real characters, with social manners and humorous satire, are introduced, form a link between the Moral Play and the regular Drama. The former, however, was represented till the time of Elizabeth.

*Ralph Roister Doister*, written by Nicolas Udall (1506–1564), Head Master of Eton, is generally regarded as the earliest specimen of our regular Comedy. It is written in rhyme, the plot being laid in London, and with some humorous dialogue and a tolerable variety of character, affords a representation of the manners and ideas of the middle class of the time. *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, by John Still (1543–1607), Bishop of Bath and Wells, also in rhyme, is the next specimen in point of time, but of inferior merit to its predecessor, the humour being coarser and

the plot trivial. Sackville's *Ferrex and Porrex*, otherwise called *Gorboduc*, the earliest of English Tragedies, was written in blank verse, and composed on the classic model, a chorus being introduced between the acts, and the events, limited in respect of place, being chiefly narrated by some of the characters instead of being enacted before the audience.[1] To this succeeded a class of plays, mostly written in rhyme, and combining both the tragic and comic elements, but generally of so little merit, that of fifty-two pieces mentioned by Payne Collier as having been produced between 1568 and 1580, none have survived.

About the time last named, a new era was introduced by the works of Marlow, Peele, Greene, and Lodge, who are to be regarded as the real founders of the Elizabethan Drama. Adopting blank verse as better fitted to express transition and variety of emotion than rhyme, and, for the first time in dramatic poetry, combining luxuriance of imagery with elegance and fervour of diction, this gifted group initiate the illustrious roll adorned with the names of Shakspeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Jonson, Massinger, Ford, Webster, and Shirley,—with the last named of whom expired the flame that had burned with such lustre for nearly a century.

[1] The classic drama required the observance of certain rules, based upon the unities of time, place, and character or action. According to the theory of the three unities, the events represented ought nearly to coincide with the time occupied in the performance, in order, as much as possible, to preserve the verisimilitude; and, for the same reason, they were to be similarly limited as to place. It was conceived to be a violation of probability that no imagination could endure, to suppose, for example, that a youth in the first act should reach manhood or old age within the space of a few hours; or that the theatre, actors, audience, and all, should be whisked about from one city or country, nay, perhaps, from one quarter of the globe, to another, at the mere caprice or necessity of the author! Such events connected with the development of the piece as were by this theory precluded from actual representation, were merely narrated in conversation by the actors. Unity of action forbade the author to introduce such incidents as might divert the minds of the audience from the catastrophe or main action; neither was the predominant emotion of fear, horror, or compassion, sought to be excited by a tragedy, to be interrupted or marred, as it was assumed it must be, by any by-play of humorous or light dialogue. These rules, derived from the precepts of Aristotle and Horace, but absurd and incomprehensible when applied to the modern stage, were utterly set at nought by Shakspeare and his school, which has, on that account, been designated the "Romantic School." In the French drama, on the contrary, by the authority and example of Corneille, they were applied with more severity than by the ancients themselves. Voltaire, a writer of tragedies as well as a critic, expressed surprise that a nation possessing the classical tragedy of *Cato*, could endure the extravagances of Shakspeare!

# CHAPTER IV.

## AUTHORS AND WORKS.

Lyly—Marlow—Peele, and others—Shakspeare—Ben Jonson—Massinger—Beaumont and Fletcher—Webster—Ford—Shirley—Minor Dramatists.

### JOHN LYLY.

JOHN LYLY, born in Kent in 1554, is perhaps less known as a dramatic writer than as the author of *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*, which gave rise to an affected style of conversation among the ladies and gentlemen of Elizabeth's Court. The corrupt and pedantic phraseology of "Euphuism" did not, however, outlive the age of its invention. Lyly's dramas are the production of scholarship united to an elegant fancy and a somewhat fantastic wit, but not of a writer capable of moving the passions, or of depicting character by subtle and felicitous touches. Their beauties lie in the lyric pieces with which they are interspersed; of which the following exquisite song from the drama of *Alexander and Campaspe* is one of the best specimens:—

#### CUPID AND CAMPASPE.

Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses—Cupid paid;
He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip; the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these, the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple on his chin:
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes;
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love! has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas, become of me?

### CHRISTOPHER MARLOW.—1562–1593.

Amongst those of the immediate predecessors of Shakspeare who gave birth to a really national dramatic literature, Marlow is immeasurably the greatest. Supposed to have been born in 1562, he was educated at Cambridge, where he took the degree of "Master of Arts." His life was short and profligate, and his end tragic, having at thirty years of age met his death in a disgraceful tavern brawl. His principal dramas are, *The Jew of Malta*, *Edward the Second*, and *Faustus*. "Had he lived longer to profit by the example of Shakspeare," says an eminent critic, "it is not straining conjecture to suppose that the strong misguided energy of Marlow might have been kindled and refined to excellence by the rivalship." His descriptions are characterized by almost unequalled power, the concluding scene in *Faustus* being truly terrible, while that in *Edward the Second* has no parallel but in Shakspeare for naturalness and effect. Marlow translated part of *Ovid* and some other classical works.

#### THE DEATH OF FAUSTUS.

[Faustus having entered into a contract with Satan, to whom he engaged to forfeit his soul at the end of twenty-four years, on condition of enjoying unlimited power during that period, his despair on the approach of the fatal moment is described in the following extract:—]

FAUSTUS *alone.—The clock strikes eleven.*

*Faust.* O Faustus!
Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damned perpetually.
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease, and midnight never come.
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day: or, let this hour be but
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
That Faustus may repent and save his soul.

* * * * *

The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike.

* * * * *

Oh, I'll leap up to heaven: who pulls me down?
See where Christ's blood streams in the firmament:
One drop of blood will save me! . . . . . .
Yet will I call on Him: O, spare me, Lucifer!
Where is it now?—'tis gone!
And see, a threat'ning arm, an angry brow!
Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of Heaven!
No! Then will I headlong run into the earth:
Gape earth! Oh, no! It will not harbour me.
Ye stars that reigned at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,
Into the entrails of yon labouring cloud,
That when you vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
But let my soul mount and ascend to heaven.

*The watch strikes.*

Oh, half the hour is past: 'twill all be past anon!
Oh, if my soul must suffer for my sin,
Impose some end to my incessant pain.
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
A hundred thousand, and at last be saved:
No end is limited to damnéd souls.
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?
Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
O Pythagoras! metempsychosis, were that true,
This soul should fly from me, and I be changed
Into some brutish beast.
All beasts are happy; for when they die
Their souls are soon dissolved in element.

* * * * *

*The clock strikes twelve.*

It strikes! it strikes! Now body turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell.
O soul, be changed into small water drops,
And fall into the ocean—ne'er be found!

## SONG.

### THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE.

Come live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That valleys, groves, or hills, or field,
Or woods and steepy mountains yield.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And then a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing,
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

## GEORGE PEELE—ROBERT GREENE—THOMAS NASH—THOMAS LODGE.

The names of Marlow, Peele, and Greene, are associated as coadjutors in the improvement of our early drama. Following the same pursuits and displaying many common traits of genius, they indulged together in a course of reckless dissipation, and all prematurely terminated their career; Marlow, as we have seen, by a violent death; Peele, by the effect of his debaucheries; and Greene, by a surfeit. Peele is supposed to have been born about the year 1553, and studied at Oxford. Of his poetry, Campbell remarks that "there is no such sweetness of versification and imagery to be found in our language anterior to Shakspeare." In the drama of *David and Bathsheba*, his principal work, there are

several passages of uncommon beauty. Greene, supposed to have been born in 1560, was educated at Cambridge, and died in 1592. Besides plays, he devoted his fluent and lively pen to the writing of romances; from one of which, named *Pandosto*, the *Triumph of Time*, Shakspeare borrowed the plot of *Winter's Tale*. Thomas Nash, born about 1564, and educated at Cambridge, wrote a comedy called *Summer's Last Will and Testament*; and had some share with Marlow in the composition of the tragedy of *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. In his own time he was best known as a satirist; but even had there been no literary remains to preserve his memory, he would still have been remembered as the gay and keen-witted boon-companion of Marlow, Peele, and Greene. Thomas Lodge, born in 1556, wrote a play in conjunction with Greene, entitled *A Looking-glass for London*. He was also the author of a novel called *Rosalind;* which deserves notice, not only as having furnished the basis of Shakspeare's *As You Like It*, but also as containing many beautiful songs.

### WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE—1564-1616.

William Shakspeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in Warwickshire, in the year 1564. His father, John Shakspeare, who had married Mary Arden, the daughter of a landed gentleman of the county, was either a wool-comber or glover in respectable circumstances, and at one time held the office of Mayor of Stratford, besides being a Justice of the Peace. Shakspeare received his education at the Grammar School of his native town; but the extent of his scholastic training has been the subject of much conjecture and discussion. On leaving school, he is supposed to have been engaged in his father's business; and at the early age of eighteen he married Ann Hathaway, eight years his senior, the daughter of a substantial yeoman of the neighbourhood. By her he had three children, a son and two daughters. About four years after his marriage, he was obliged to leave Stratford for London, under circumstances accounted for by a tradition which his recent biographers seem disposed to accept with considerable modification. The story runs that he had associated himself with

a company of young men addicted to poaching; and that having been prosecuted by Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote for stealing his deer, he caused a lampoon of the knight to be affixed to his gate. His resentment at this new affront rendered the poet's residence in his native town no longer convenient; and it is believed he has commemorated this passage in his early life by representing Sir Thomas as Justice Shallow in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. After his arrival in London, his history is not clearly traced until we find him in the possession of an ample competence, the fruit of his dramatic labours, and of his share in the proprietary of the *Globe* and *Blackfriars' Theatres*. His first connection with the stage was in the capacity of an actor; in which, however, he is said to have performed no higher a part than that of the Ghost in his own play of *Hamlet*. In 1612 he retired to his estate in Warwickshire, where he died in 1616, when he had just completed his fifty-second year. His son had died in 1596; but his two daughters survived him. There is no lineal representative of his family.

Shakspeare wrote thirty-seven plays, besides the poems of *Venus and Adonis*, *Tarquin and Lucrece*, and a collection of sonnets.

His dramatic works have been grouped into three cycles. To the first, closing about the year 1591, are ascribed the three parts of the historical play of *Henry the Sixth*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Pericles*, the comedies of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors;* and by some, *The Taming of the Shrew*. This period also includes *Romeo and Juliet*, and a sketch of the tragedy of *Hamlet*, which was subsequently rewritten.

The second or middle period, extending to about the close of the century, comprises the comedies of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. With the exception of *Henry the Eighth* and *Henry the Sixth*, all the historical plays were composed during this period.

During the latter period of Shakspeare's life were produced the greatest of his works, the tragedies of *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear;* to which must be added *Hamlet* in its latest form. The

list embraces the tragedies of *Troilus and Cressida*, *Julius Cesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens*, and is completed by *Henry the Eighth*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. The last named is supposed to have been his latest work. His authorship of some of these plays, particularly *Titus Andronicus*, *Pericles*, and the First Part of *Henry the Sixth*, has been questioned, on the ground of their manifest inferiority to the others.

The dissertations on Shakspeare's genius and works form a literature of themselves, his most eminent commentators being Dryden, Johnson, Campbell, Hazlitt, Jeffrey, Hunt, Lamb, Hallam, Coleridge, and the celebrated German critic, Schlegel. From the last we quote the following comprehensive estimate of the greatest of dramatists:—

"Shakspeare's knowledge of mankind has become proverbial: in this his superiority is so great, that he has justly been called the master of the human heart. His characters appear neither to do nor say anything on account of the spectator; and yet the poet, by means of the exhibition itself, without any subsidiary explanation, enables us to look into the inmost recesses of their minds. How each man is constituted, Shakspeare reveals to us in the most immediate manner. He demands and obtains our belief, even for what is singular and deviates from the ordinary course of nature. Never, perhaps, was so comprehensive a talent for characterization possessed by any other man. It not only grasps the diversities of rank, sex, and age, down to the dawnings of infancy; not only do his kings and beggars, heroes and pickpockets, sages and fools, speak and act with equal truth; not only have his human characters such depth and comprehension, that they cannot be ranged under classes, and are inexhaustible, even in conception; but he opens the gates of the magic world of spirits, calls up the midnight ghost, exhibits witches amidst their unhallowed mysteries, peoples the air with sportive fairies and sylphs; and these beings, existing only in imagination, possess such truth and consistency, that, even in the case of deformed monsters, like Caliban, he extorts the conviction, that if there should be such beings, they would so conduct themselves."

In a dramatic author it is difficult to separate philosophical analysis from those more technical peculiarities characterized as style. In Shakspeare every passion, every shade of feeling is depicted with irresistible effect; his revelations of human nature are like the truths of science, and his illustrations are as pertinent and immutable as its axioms. He has expatiated over every domain of imagination; and as his expression is always the proper exponent of his thought, it appears simply a truism to say that he is consequently a master of every style. He has all the excellences of all the greatest poets, and all his own besides. His is "a muse of fire," so quick, fresh, and capacious, that none enters into comparison,—

> "Of what validity and pitch soever,
> But falls into abatement and low price."

He has the wit and penetration of Chaucer, the beauty of Spenser, and the sublimity of Milton; and for whatever any subsequent poet has rendered himself famous, there will be found a better prototype in Shakspeare's immortal conceptions. In addition to his great name, our literature can boast of a cluster of dramatists to which no other nation can produce a parallel; but our idea of the drama is naturally and almost exclusively identified with the plays of Shakspeare.

As no play of Shakspeare can be thoroughly appreciated except when regarded as a whole, we have selected *The Merchant of Venice* as the most suitable for illustration. Most of the Miscellaneous Extracts should be committed to memory.

### "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

The main plot of the *Merchant of Venice* is traced to an old ballad, which relates how the cruel Jew, Gernutus, having lent a merchant a hundred crowns, obtained from him a bond, as if in jest, whereby the debtor agreed, in default of payment, to forfeit a pound of flesh cut from his own body. Out of these and the equally slender materials furnished by the tale of the Three Caskets, in the *Gesta Romanorum*, that form the basis of the subordinate plot,

Shakspeare has constructed this most interesting and beautiful drama, which teems with the finest traits of his genius in strong individuality of character, lofty eloquence, and depth of reflection. The play opens in Venice, with a conversation between Antonio, the Merchant of Venice, and his acquaintances Salanio and Salarino, wherein we learn that the whole fortune of the first is embarked in several richly laden vessels. Antonio is then joined by his friend and kinsman Bassanio, who, after explaining his circumstances, requests Antonio's assistance in enabling him to appear with suitable pomp as one of the suitors of the fair Portia, whom he thus describes:—

PORTIA.

In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wond'rous virtues; sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont, Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.

Antonio authorizes his friend to make use of his credit for whatever sum he may require; and Bassanio accordingly applies to Shylock, the rich Jew. Inspired with a deadly hatred of Antonio, who had treated him with the undisguised contempt universally bestowed upon his tribe, Shylock nevertheless affects to overlook the injuries which he had just characterized in a tone of bitter indignation and pointed sarcasm that reveals at a glance the keen intellect, strong will, and fierce passion of this powerfully drawn character. He agrees to lend Antonio three thousand ducats for three months, and, "in a merry sport," as he says, proposes a bond of the description already mentioned. Antonio, confident of the return of his vessels before the fatal penalty can be exacted,

subscribes the bond. In the following lively and sparkling dialogue at Belmont, between Portia and her maid Nerissa, we learn the position in which the royally endowed heiress has been placed by the will of her father:—

*Por.* By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

*Ner.* You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are; and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing: it is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean; superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

*Por.* Good sentences, and well pronounced.

*Ner.* They would be better, if well followed.

*Por.* If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages, princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instruction: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness, the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel, the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me! the word "Choose!" I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

*Ner.* Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men, at their death, have good inspirations: therefore, the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests, of gold, silver, and lead, (whereof who chooses his meaning, chooses you,) will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

*Por.* I pray thee, overname them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

*Ner.* First there is the Neapolitan prince.

*Por.* Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

*Ner.* Then, there is the county Palatine.

*Por.* He doth nothing but frown, as who should say, *An if you will not have me, choose:* he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these.

*Ner.* How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

*Por.* Heaven made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker; but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with

his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him; for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

*Ner.* What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

*Por.* You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture; but, alas, who can converse with a dumb show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere.

*Ner.* What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

*Por.* That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

*Ner.* How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

*Por.* Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

*Ner.* If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

*Por.* Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.

*Ner.* You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations: which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

*Por.* If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I wish them a fair departure.

*Ner.* Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

*Por.* Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

*Ner.* True, madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

*Por.* I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

The first of the caskets, upon which Portia's fate depends, is of gold, with the inscription, *Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;* the second, of silver, holds forth this somewhat dubious promise, *Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;* and the third is of lead, "with warning all as blunt," *Who*

*chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.* In one of these caskets is the portrait of Portia, and he who chooses it is to be the gainer of her hand and fortune. Every one of the candidates is enjoined by oath, first, never to unfold to any one the casket he chose; next, if he failed of the right casket, immediately to depart from Belmont, and never in life to offer himself in marriage to any lady.

The incomparable genius of Shakspeare is strikingly shown in the pungency of observation and flow of thought which he so easily lavishes on transient or unimportant characters. This peculiarity is to some extent exemplified in the speeches of two of Portia's suitors, the princes of Morocco and Arragon, the former of whom preludes a discourse full of ardour and eloquence by the beautiful and well-known lines :—

> Mislike me not for my complexion,
> The shadow'd livery of the burnished sun.

He ventures for the golden casket, which discloses a death's head with a scroll consisting of these verses :—

> All that glisters is not gold ;
> Often have you heard that told :
> Many a man his life hath sold,
> But my outside to behold :
> Gilded tombs do worms infold.
> Had you been as wise as bold,
> Young in limbs, in judgment old,
> Your answer had not been inscrolled ;
> Fare you well, your suit is cold.

The Prince of Arragon, who, after nice balancing, prefers the silver casket, fares still worse. Instead of finding the portrait of Portia, he is presented by a fool's head with the following schedule :—

> The fire seven times tried this ;
> Seven times tried that judgment is
> That did never choose amiss :
> Some there be that shadows kiss,
> Such have but a shadow's bliss :
> There be fools alive, I wis,
> Silvered o'er, and so was this.

Take what wife you will to wed,
I will ever be your head:
So be gone, sir, you are sped.

The keen, searching wit of Portia is tempered by the dignity and refinement becoming her exalted rank. She receives the homage of her unacceptable admirers with benign courtesy, and has too much delicacy of feeling to betray her satisfaction at their disappointment. Though duly measuring the vanity of the Prince of Arragon, she does not ostentatiously exhibit him as a foil to her own intellectual superiority, and finds it no sacrifice to forego what is to the merely witty the irresistible temptation of personal satire or brilliant repartee. When thus rashly expressing his mortification—

Do I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? Are my deserts no better?

he is simply reminded that,—

To offend and judge are distinct offices,
And of opposéd natures.

And, on his departure, the moral of his failure is pointed in the following pithy reflection:—

Oh these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Bassanio, the only welcome suitor of Portia, at length arrives at Belmont. The caskets being set before him, he soliloquizes on the deceitfulness of external appearance in the following truly Shakspearian passage:—

So may the outward shows be least themselves;
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damnéd error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.

How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward searched, have livers white as milk!
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted. Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:
So are those crisped, snaky, golden locks,
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head;
The skull that bred them, in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth, which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest.

Giving effect to this train of reflection, he prefers the leaden casket, in which he finds the scroll that decrees his success, and the happiness of the two lovers :—

You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content, and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.

In the meantime news have arrived in Venice that Antonio, to whose generosity Bassanio has been so much indebted, had been ruined by the wreck of his vessels. Shylock, hating Antonio with all the intensity of his strong nature, but which he is not deficient in arguments to justify to himself—stung, moreover, into frenzy by the elopement of his daughter Jessica with Lorenzo, another hated Christian, the friend of Bassanio—resolves to exact the penalty of the bond, the pound of flesh, and thus take revenge not only for his own personal injuries, but also to make, as it were, a general settlement of the outlying balance between Jew and Christian. He

rejects all proposals of compromise in the following outburst of fierce eloquence and ruthless logic :—

If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me of half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies. And what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Bassanio being informed by letter of the forfeiture of Antonio's bond, hastens to Venice to purchase his release, by the offer, if necessary, of tenfold the sum. The far-seeing and ingenious Portia, now his wife, justly surmising, from her knowledge of the Jew's character, that all such offers will be rejected, communicates with her cousin, Bellario, a learned lawyer of Padua, and arrives at the court of justice on the day of the trial, in the disguise of a young lawyer, sent by Bellario to expound the law. The Duke, the president of the tribunal, submits the question to her decision; and the supposed lawyer, being shown the bond, declares it forfeited, and Shylock, by the law of Venice, entitled to exact the penalty. But "the Jew," she says, "must be merciful."

*Shylock.* On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.

The elevation of sentiment and majesty of expression with which Portia sustains the dignity of her assumed character, render her one of the most imposing, as the vivacity of her wit renders her one of the most engaging of Shakspeare's female portraits. By no lips could the noble tribute to mercy, in which she thus deprecates the cruel vengeance of Shylock, be more becomingly pronounced than by this fine impersonation of grace, virtue, and intellect :—

MERCY.

The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice: therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy.

But the relentless Shylock is to be moved neither by bribe, eloquence, nor entreaty. He refuses the offer of the money trebled, and, insisting on justice, inexorably demands his bond. Prepared with scales to weigh his pound of flesh, and with knife in hand, he is about to execute his fell purpose, when he is thus warned by the judge:—

Tarry a little;—there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are, a pound of flesh;
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

The law being thus interpreted, the Jew is willing to accept the money; but he is told that having refused it in open court, he shall have nothing but the forfeit, to be taken at his peril. He is about to leave the court in a rage, when the law is thus further expounded to him by the young doctor, whom he had for legal

wisdom at first pronounced to be "a second Daniel come to judgment!"—

> Tarry, Jew;
> The law hath yet another hold on you.
> It is enacted in the laws of Venice,—
> If it be proved against an alien,
> That, by direct or indirect attempts,
> He seek the life of any citizen,
> The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
> Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
> Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
> And the offender's life lies in the mercy
> Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
> In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st
> For it appears by manifest proceeding,
> That, indirectly, and directly too,
> Thou hast contrived against the very life
> Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred
> The danger formerly by me rehearsed.

Shylock has thus himself incurred the punishment of death; but his life is spared by the Duke, on conditions which the Jew scarcely considers merciful, the forfeiture, namely, of a great part of his fortune to Antonio, and the reversion of his property to his son-in-law and daughter.

With the trial scene ends the dramatic interest of the piece; but there are some favourite passages in the subsequent act. Lorenzo and Jessica, having been left in charge of Belmont by Portia during her absence at Venice, the following discourse takes place between them in the avenue, on the night of her return from the trial:—

> *Lor.* How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
> Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
> Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night
> Become the touches of sweet harmony.
> Sit, Jessica; look how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlayed with patines of bright gold;
> There's not the smallest orb, which thou behold'st,
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:
> Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter Musicians.*

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn;
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,
And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

*Jess.* I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

*Lor.* The reason is, your spirits are attentive;
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music: therefore, the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature:
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted.—Mark the music.

*Enter* PORTIA *and* NERISSA *at a distance.*

*Por.* That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Ner.* When the moon shone we did not see the candle.

*Por.* So doth the greater glory dim the less;
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until a king be by; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

*Ner.* It is your music, madam, of the house.

*Por.* Nothing is good, I see, without respect;[1]
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

*Ner.* Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

*Por.* The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended; and, I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,

[1] Without reference to something else.

When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season seasoned are
To their right praise, and true perfection!

The *Merchant of Venice* is assigned to the second period of Shakspeare's dramatic life. "In no other play," says Hallam, "do we find the bright imagination of [his] youth so mingled with the thoughtfulness of his maturer age." Of the one portion of this estimate, every page will afford an example; and the other is especially illustrated by the beautiful episode of the caskets, which is pervaded throughout by an ethereal spirit of poetry and romance.

## MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS.

### SPEECH OF BRUTUS.

Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my cause; and be silent, that you may hear: believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe: censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Cesar's, to him I say that Brutus' love to Cesar was no less than his. If, then, that friend demand, why Brutus rose against Cesar? this is my answer: Not that I loved Cesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Cesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Cesar were dead, to live all freemen? As Cesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but as he was ambitious, I slew him. There are tears for his love, joy for his fortune, honour for his valour, and death for his ambition. Who is here so base, that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude, that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile, that would not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

*Julius Cesar, Act* iii.

### MARK ANTONY'S ORATION.

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.
I come to bury Cesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Cesar! Noble Brutus
Hath told you Cesar was ambitious;
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Cesar answered it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—
For Brutus is an honourable man—

So are they all, all honourable men,—
Come I to speak in Cesar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill;
Did this in Cesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Cesar hath wept;
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff;
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that, on the Lupercal,
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And sure he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause;
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me,
My heart is in the coffin there with Cesar,
And I must pause, till it come back to me.

* * * * *

But yesterday the word of Cesar might
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.
O masters! if I were disposed to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honourable men.
I will not do them wrong: I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men.
But here's a parchment with the seal of Cesar,—
I found it in his closet; 'tis his will:
Let but the commons hear this testament,—
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,—
And they would go and kiss dead Cesar's wounds,
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
Unto their issue.

* * * * *

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
You all do know this mantle; I remember
The first time ever Cesar put it on:
'Twas on a summer's evening in his tent,
That day he overcame the Nervii.
Look! in this place ran Cassius' dagger through;
See what a rent the envious Casca made!
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd;
And, as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Cesar follow'd it!
As rushing out of doors to be resolv'd
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd or no.
For Brutus, as you know, was Cesar's angel:
Judge, O you gods! how dearly Cesar loved him!
This was the most unkindest cut of all:
For when the noble Cesar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitor's arms,
Quite vanquish'd him; then burst his mighty heart;
And in his mantle muffling up his face,
Even at the base of Pompey's statue,
Which all the while ran blood, great Cesar fell.
Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down;
Whilst bloody treason flourished over us.
O, now you weep; and I perceive you feel
The dint of pity; these are gracious drops.
Kind souls! what! weep you when you but behold
Our Cesar's vesture wounded? look you here!
Here is himself, marr'd as you see by traitors.

* * * * *

Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up
To such a sudden flood of mutiny:
They that have done this deed are honourable.
What private griefs they have, alas! I know not,
That made them do it;—they are wise and honourable,
And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:
I am no orator, as Brutus is,
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
That love my friend; and that they know full well,
That give me public leave to speak of him;
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action nor utt'rance, nor the power of speech
To stir men's blood; I only speak right on.
I tell you that which you yourselves do know;
Show you sweet Cesar's wounds,—poor, poor dumb mouths!
And bid them speak for me. But were I Brutus,

And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Cesar, that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

*Julius Cesar, Act* iii.

### HAMLET'S SOLILOQUY ON DEATH.

To be,—or not to be?—that is the question:—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing, end them? To die?—to sleep—
No more; and by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to;—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die—to sleep—
To sleep? perchance to dream. Ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pang of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes;
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
That undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns, puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

*Hamlet, Act* iii., *Scene* 1.

### IMAGINATION.

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;

That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

*A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act* v.

### CONCEALED LOVE.

She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek. She pined in thought;
And with a green-and-yellow melancholy,
She sat like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.

*Twelfth Night, Act* ii.

### THE BEES.

So work the honey bees;
Creatures that, by a rule in nature, teach
The act of order to a peopled kingdom.
They have a king and officers of sorts:
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home:
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad:
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds;
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent royal of their emperor:
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing masons building roofs of gold;
The civil citizens kneading up the honey;
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate;
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to executors pale
The lazy yawning drone.

*Henry V., Act* i.

### DEPARTING GREATNESS.

The soul and body rive not more in parting,
Than greatness going off.

*Antony and Cleopatra, Act* iv.

### THE SEVEN AGES.

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail,
Unwillingly to school; and then, the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad
Made to his mistress' eye-brow. Then the soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth: and then the justice,
In fair round belly, with good capon lined,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side;
His youthful hose well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shanks; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound: last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion:
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

*As You Like It, Act* ii.

### CHASTITY.

The noble sister of Poplicola,
The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle
That's curded by the frost from purest snow,
And hangs on Dian's temple.

### REPUTATION.

Good name, in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name,

Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

*Othello, Act* iii.

## HOPE.

True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings;
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.

*Richard III., Act* v.

## DESCRIPTION OF QUEEN MAB.

She is the fairies' midwife; and she comes,
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies,
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's wat'ry beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coachmakers:
And in this state she gallops night by night,
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees:

* * * * *

Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit:
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose, as a' lies asleep;
Then dreams he of another benefice.
Sometimes she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes;
And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again.

*Romeo and Juliet, Act* i.

### LIFE.

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not! and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.

*All's Well that Ends Well, Act* iv.

### ADVERSITY.

Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head:
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

*As You Like It, Act* ii.

### DESCRIPTION OF CLEOPATRA.

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumèd, that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
Which to the time of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggared all description: she did lie
In her pavilion (cloth of gold, of tissue),
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature; on each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers coloured fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid, did.

*Antony and Cleopatra, Act* ii.

### ARIEL'S SONG.

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made:
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Hark! now I hear them,—ding-dong, bell.

*Tempest, Act* i.

CLOTEN'S SERENADE.

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies:
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty bin,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

*Cymbeline, Act* ii., *Scene* 3.

AMIENS' SONG.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind!
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky!
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd[1] not.

*As You Like It, Act* ii., *Scene* 7.

## BEN JONSON—1574–1637.

Benjamin, or as he more commonly designated himself, Ben Jonson, was the son of a Dissenting clergyman, and was born at Westminster shortly after the death of his father in 1574. Through the kindness of a friend he was sent to Westminster School, of which the celebrated Camden was then second master, the value of whose instruction he afterwards warmly acknowledged. By the influence of the same unknown patron he obtained an exhibition to Cambridge; but this proving insufficient to support him, he withdrew from the university to assist in the business of his father-in-law, a master bricklayer, whom his mother

[1] That is, remembering.

had married about two years after the birth of Ben. Unable to overcome his dislike to this uncongenial occupation, he left England to serve as a volunteer in the Netherlands against the Spaniards; where, although a mere stripling, he distinguished himself by slaying one of the enemy in single combat. On returning to his native country, he betook himself to the stage; and at this early period of his career, being not yet twenty years of age, he was challenged to fight a duel by a person supposed to have been a player, and having had the misfortune to kill his opponent, was thrown into prison on the charge of murder. Though released without being tried, he was by this incident brought near to the gallows. In 1596 he produced his comedy of *Every Man in his Humour*, which was honoured with the approbation and patronage of Queen Elizabeth, and in 1598 was acted with great applause at the Globe Theatre. His success excited the envy of some of his contemporaries, and their persistent malice and scurrility roused him to retaliation in a piece called *The Poetaster*, wherein he severely castigates Marston and Dekker, his principal opponents, though formerly his coadjutors in dramatic composition. In *Satiromastix* they replied with indifferent success; but the quarrel was afterwards made up.

After the accession of James I. Jonson became a distinguished favourite, and was appointed poet-laureate, with a pension of two hundred marks. For the entertainment of that Prince and his Court he composed those *Masques* where his genius expatiates in a dreamland of poetical beauty that contrasts strikingly with the stern reality of his comedies. The *Masques* may be regarded as a later form of those spectacles which, in the Middle Ages, under the name of "pageants" or "shows," constituted an important feature in the pomp of a royal coronation or a royal progress, or which on festive occasions were presented at the Universities and Inns of Court. At the Court of Henry VIII. this species of entertainment was distinguished at best by a profusion of empty splendour; and the perfection to which it was brought by the refined taste and elegant fancy of Jonson, is thus substantially described by his biographer: The dialogue, singing, and dancing,

instead of being independent of each other, were combined by some ingenious fable into a harmonious whole; the characters were generally drawn from the mythology of Greece and Rome; movable scenery of the most costly and splendid kind was lavishly introduced, and all the excellence that the kingdom afforded of vocal and instrumental music was employed to embellish the exhibition. Thus magnificently constructed, the *Masque* was not committed to ordinary performers, but being expressly composed for princes, was played by the nobility of both sexes, led on by the king and queen.

In the year 1618 Jonson made a journey to Scotland on foot, and resided for a month with Drummond of Hawthornden, a brother poet. This visit proved unfortunate in its results. Drummond was temperate in his habits, and probably correspondingly measured in his discourse. Jonson, on the contrary, was of a convivial disposition, and accustomed to give free expression to his feelings and opinions. Drummond, in a record of his conversations with Jonson, wherein are preserved many of his guest's observations upon his contemporaries, expresses his dislike both of his manner and of his character. The confidential remarks of Jonson thus revealed by Drummond have subjected the former to the charge of malignity and the latter to that of treachery. As Jonson's judgments, though sometimes severe and sarcastic, were purely literary, and as they are in many instances felt to be just and profound, he seems to pass through the ordeal of these accusations with more credit than Drummond.

The year 1625 was fraught with misfortune to Jonson. It witnessed the death of James I., his warm patron; and shortly after that event he was himself seized with a paralytic affection, from which he appears never to have entirely recovered. With bad health he was now to experience the neglect of the Court; and his latter days were imbittered by a quarrel with Inigo Jones, for whom he had procured the favour of James I., but who repaid this kindness by employing his influence with Charles I. to the prejudice of his former friend and benefactor. The swarm of envious and malignant scribblers, who, while his vigour was un-

impaired, had not ventured within the sweep of his powerful wing, now persecuted him with the ill-omened audacity of the raven. His pension not being regularly paid, he was compelled to solicit the royal bounty, but the relief he obtained from this source was not always sufficient for his necessities; and it is painful to contemplate the frequency of his applications to those patrons from whom conscious merit or former kindness encouraged him to expect assistance. The protracted struggle with disease, want, and detraction, which clouded the latter portion of this highly-gifted and once haughty-spirited man's career was terminated by his death in 1637. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, where his resting-place is indicated by the laconic epitaph, "O rare Ben Jonson!"

Jonson is one of the most profoundly learned of all the poets, and his works abound in skilful adaptations of the ancient writers to the circumstances and characters of his plays. His first successful comedy of *Every Man in his Humour* is the only one that has kept possession of the stage; but his fame as a dramatist depends more upon his three pieces of *The Alchemist*, *The Fox*, and *The Silent Woman*, the first of which Gifford pronounces to be "a prodigy of the human intellect." His comedies are constructed upon the classic model; and he avowed it to be his intention to introduce more method into the structure of the drama than had been observed by his predecessors and contemporaries. His comedies are, in fact, master-pieces of constructive art; and though it was his express design to instruct and reform rather than to amuse his audience, the pieces just mentioned cede to none for the interest with which they inspire the reader. Jonson had not the "keys of the passions;" his strength lay in description of character, where he exposes vice and folly as unsparingly and effectively as Juvenal himself. He was called the poet of "humours," not in the modern sense of that term, but because he set himself to depict those follies and affectations, or more eccentric traits of character, which were at that time termed "humours." His tragedies of *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, though now almost forgotten, must possess merit of no ordinary stamp if they

justify the observation of Dryden, that "he so represents old Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that if their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him."

The most fascinating effusions of Jonson's wonderfully versatile genius are the songs and short pieces interspersed through his *Masques*, and the collections entitled *The Forest* and *The Underwoods*, some of which are translations or imitations of the ancients. It is these delicious lyrics, in which the muse of Jonson blends what is most attractive in the graces of classic poesy with an exquisite tenderness and a chastened brilliance of fancy, that will probably best perpetuate his name among the poets. The fragment of a pastoral drama called *The Sad Shepherd* is one of his best efforts.

The character of Jonson has been successfully vindicated by Gifford against the charges of envy and malignity which had been heaped upon him for a century after his death, particularly by the commentators upon Shakspeare. With a fund of learning rarely equalled, and conscious of the possession of a genius equally rare, he was not scrupulous in expressing his contempt for those who differed from him in matters of criticism, particularly when the merits of his own plays were concerned; but there seems to be no ground for believing that he either meanly envied or endeavoured to detract from the fame of his great contemporary.

From the preceding observations it will be seen that Jonson's drama differed entirely from the Shakspearian or romantic school, both as regards the theory of the art and the object to be attained by it. His comedies are professedly didactic in their design and classic in their construction; but he permitted himself more license in his tragedies.

### "EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR."

The title of this play is explained by the meaning of the word "humour," which, in the time of Jonson, signified every oddity which a man affected. Captain Bobadil is the most prominent and typical character, and is drawn so effectively that his name

has become in our language the synonym for a boaster. He is described in the *dramatis personæ* as *a Paul's man*,—that is, "a frequenter of the middle aisle of St. Paul's, the resort of cast captains, sharpers, gulls,[1] and gossipers of every description." The Paul's man, who was in the habit of dining with Duke Humphrey, had not escaped the satire of Hall; and our captain, although constantly assuming the condition of "a gentleman and a soldier," lodges with a water-carrier, and sleeps on a bench, *in regard he would not be too popular and generally visited as some are.* The town and country gulls, Matthew and Stephen, afford considerable amusement, especially the latter, who is evidently a blood-relation of Sir Andrew Aguecheek. He is prodigiously fascinated by Bobadil's fine oaths, "by Pharaoh's foot," "body o' Cesar," and "had as lief as an angel he could swear as well as that gentleman." Matthew is equally an admirer of the word-valiant captain, from whom he receives lessons in the art of fence with a bed-staff borrowed from Bobadil's hostess. The captain vaunts his skill to his pupil by telling him, "I will learn you, by the true judgment of the eye, hand, and foot, to control any enemy's point in the world. Should your adversary confront you with a pistol, 'twere nothing, by this hand! You should by the same rule control his bullet in a line, except it were hail-shot and spread." Matthew having been threatened with a cudgelling by Downright, Bobadil makes common cause with him; and although he has an infinite contempt for Downright, whom he by no means considers worthy of such an honour, he assures Matthew that he shall kill him beyond question, if he be so generously minded. It adds considerably to the effect of the catastrophe of Bobadil's disgrace in the following passage, that he had just been boasting how, when attacked by five or six fencing masters, who were envious of his reputation, he drove them before him the whole length of

> "A gull is he which wears good handsome clothes,
> And stands in presence stroking up his hair,
> And fills up his imperfect speech with oaths,
> But speaks not one wise word throughout the year;
> But to define a gull in terms precise,
> A gull is he which seems, and is not wise."
>
> *Davis' Epigrams.*

a street, and how he could have slain them all, but *forbore hurting them, as he delighted not in murder!* In the following humorous scene Bobadil is exhibited at full length:—

THE BOASTING AND CHASTISEMENT OF BOBADIL.

*Matthew, E. Knowell, Bobadil,* and *Stephen.*

*Bob.* I will tell you, sir, by the way of private and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure and to myself; but were I known to her Majesty and the Lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the State, not only to spare the entire lives of her subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of her yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

*E. Know.* Nay, I know not, nor can I conceive.

*Bob.* Why, thus, sir. I would select nineteen more to myself throughout the land; gentlemen they should be of good spirit, strong and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have: and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your punto, your reverso, your stoccato, your imbroccato, your passada, your montanto, till they could all play very near or altogether as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong, we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March or thereabouts, and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not in their honour refuse us: Well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them too: and thus would we kill every man his twenty a-day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred;[1] two hundred a-day, five days a thousand, forty thousand; forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days kills them all up by computation. And this will I venture my poor gentleman-like carcase to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood; that is, civilly by the sword.

*E. Know.* Why, are you so sure of your hand, Captain, at all times?

*Bob.* Tut! Never miss thrust, upon my reputation with you.

*E. Know.* I would not stand in Downright's state, then, an you meet him, for the wealth of any one street in London.

*Bob.* Why, sir, you mistake me; if he were here now, by this welkin I would not draw my weapon on him. Let this gentleman do his mind; but I will bastinado him, by the bright sun, wherever I meet him.

*Mat.* Faith, and I'll have a fling at him at my distance.

*E. Know.* Ods so, look where he is! Yonder he goes. [*Downright crosses the stage.*

*Down.* What peevish luck have I; I cannot meet with these bragging rascals.

*Bob.* It is not he, is it?

[1] "Bobadil does not do justice to the prowess of himself and his brothers in arms. Twenty score are four hundred, so that the enemy would be killed up in half the time which he allows for it, or one hundred days. This error in computation runs through all the relations, so that it was probably intended."—*Gifford.*

*E. Know.* Yes, faith, it is he.

*Mat.* I'll be hanged, then, if that were he.

*E. Know.* Sir, keep your hanging good for some greater matter, for I assure you that was he.

*Step.* Upon my reputation it was he.

*Bob.* Had I thought it had been he, he must not have gone so; but I can hardly be induced to believe it was he yet.

*E. Know.* That I think, sir.

*Re-enter Downright.*

But see, he is come again.

*Down.* O, Pharaoh's foot, have I found you? Come, draw to your tools; draw, gipsy, or I'll thrash you.

*Bob.* Gentleman of valour, I do believe in thee, hear me—

*Down.* Draw your weapon, then.

*Bob.* Tall man, I never thought on it till now. Body of me! I had a warrant of the peace served on me even now, as I came along, by a water-bearer. This gentleman saw it, Master Matthew.

*Down.* 'Sdeath! You will not draw, then?

*Disarms and beats him. Matthew runs away.*

*Bob.* Hold! hold! under thy favour, forbear!

*Down.* Prate again, as you like this! You'll control the point,[1] you! Your consort is gone; had he staid, he had shared with you, sir. [*Exit.*

*Bob.* Well, gentlemen, bear witness! I was bound to the peace, by this good day.

*E. Know.* No, faith, it's an ill day, Captain; never reckon it other: but, say you were bound to the peace, the law allows you to defend yourself; that will prove but a poor excuse.

*Bob.* I cannot tell, sir; I desire good construction in fair sort. I never sustained the like disgrace. Sure I was struck with a planet then, for I had no power to touch my weapon.

*E. Know.* Ay, like enough; I have heard of many that have been beaten under a planet: go, get you to a surgeon. 'Slid! an these be your tricks, your passadas, and your montantos, I'll none of them.

## SONG OF HESPERUS.

FROM "CYNTHIA'S REVELS."

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair!
Now the Sun is laid to sleep;
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep.
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright!

[1] To *control the point* was to beat it down.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close;
Bless us then with wished light,
Goddess excellently bright!

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever;
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright!

### TO CELIA.

FROM "THE FOREST."

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine!

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

### EPITAPH ON THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

Underneath this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother.
Death! ere thou hast slain another,
Learned, and fair, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

## PHILIP MASSINGER—1584-1640.

Philip Massinger was born at Salisbury in 1584, and is supposed to have been educated in the noble family of Pembroke, of

which his father was a follower. For reasons not explained, he did not enjoy the patronage of the Earl of that name, and after studying four years at Oxford, he arrived in London to commence a life-long struggle with poverty and neglect. He died in 1640.

Massinger was remarkable for facility of composition; but many of his works have been irrecoverably lost. Of his sixteen extant plays, which include *The City Madam*, *The Virgin Martyr*, *The Fatal Dowry* (written in conjunction with Nathaniel Field), and *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, a serious comedy, the last is esteemed the best, and still holds possession of the stage. His style is remarkable for dignity, and a certain refinement and beauty of expression; and it has been ascertained that after the death of Beaumont, he assisted Fletcher in some of the plays published under the name of that writer. Hallam would rank Massinger second to Shakspeare in tragedy, and not inferior in comedy to Jonson.

FROM "THE CITY MADAM," A COMEDY.

[Sir John Frugal, a merchant, retires from the world, and bestows all his wealth upon his brother Luke, who thus soliloquizes upon his newly obtained riches:—]

*Luke.* 'Twas no fantastic object, but a truth,
A real truth; nor dream. I did not slumber,
And could wake ever with a brooding eye
To gaze upon't! it did endure the touch;
I saw and felt it! Yet what I beheld
And handled oft, did so transcend belief
(My wonder and astonishment passed o'er)
I faintly could give credit to my senses.
Thou dumb magician! [*Taking out a key.*
That without a charm
Didst make my entrance easy, to possess
What wise men wish and toil for. Hermes' Moly,
Sibylla's golden bough, the great elixir,
Imagined only by the alchymist,
Compared with thee, are shadows,—thou the substance,
And guardian of felicity! No marvel
My brother made thy place of rest his bosom,
Thou being the keeper of his heart, a mistress
To be hugged ever. In by-corners of

This sacred room, silver in bags, heaped up
Like billets sawed and ready for the fire,
Unworthy to hold fellowship with bright gold,
That flowed about the room, concealed itself.
There needs no artificial light, the splendour
Makes a perpetual day there, night and darkness
By that still burning lamp for ever banished.
But when, guided by that, my eyes had made
Discovery of the caskets, and they opened,
Each sparkling diamond from itself shot forth
A pyramid of flames, and in the roof
Fixed it a glorious star, and made the place
Heaven's abstract or epitome: rubies, sapphires,
And ropes of orient pearl, these seen, I could not
But look on with contempt. And yet I found,
What weak credulity could have no faith in,
A treasure far exceeding these. Here lay
A manor bound fast in a skin of parchment;
The wax continuing hard, the acres melting.
Here a sure deed of gift for a market-town,
If not redeemed this day; which is not in
The unthrift's power: there being scarce one shire
In Wales or England, where my monies are not
Lent out at usury, the certain hook
To draw in more.

## BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Francis Beaumont, son of Judge Beaumont of the Common Pleas, was born in 1586 in Leicestershire, received his education at Cambridge, and afterwards entered the Middle Temple. John Fletcher, son of Bishop Fletcher of Bristol, was born in 1576. Beaumont died at the early age of thirty; and his friend survived him ten years, being cut off by the great plague. The species of literary partnership, so common in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, was practised by these writers to an unparalleled extent; and so much did they resemble each other in style, that it has been found difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between them. Their pieces abound in lyrical and descriptive beauty, and witty dialogue. "Their incidents," says Hallam, "are numerous and striking; their characters sometimes slightly sketched, not drawn, like those of Jonson, from a preconceived design, but preserving

that individual distinctness which a common audience requires, and often highly humorous without extravagance; their language brilliant.—Few of their comedies are without grave sentiments or elevated characters." The dramatic works of Beaumont and Fletcher amount to fifty-three in all.

FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "THE FALSE ONE."

CESAR (*when presented by Ptolemy with the head of Pompey.*)

O thou conqueror!
Thou glory of the world once, now the pity;
Thou awe of nations, wherefore didst thou fall thus?
What poor fate followed thee and plucked thee on
To trust thy sacred life to an Egyptian?
The life and light of Rome to a blind stranger,
That honourable war ne'er taught a nobleness,
Nor worthy circumstance showed what a man was?
That never heard thy name sung but in banquets,
And loose lascivious pleasures? to a boy
That had no faith to comprehend thy greatness,
No study of thy life to know thy goodness?
And leave thy nation, nay, thy noble friend,
Leave him distrusted, that in tears falls with thee;
In soft relenting tears? Hear me, great Pompey,
If thy great spirit can hear, I must task thee,
Th' hast most unnobly robbed me of my victory,
My love and mercy.

* * * * *

Egyptians, dare ye think your highest pyramids,
Built to outdare the sun, as you suppose,
Where your unworthy kings lie raked in ashes,
Are monuments fit for him? No, brood of Nilus,
Nothing can cover his high fame but heaven;
No pyramids set off his memories,
But the eternal substance of his greatness,
To which I leave him.

## JOHN WEBSTER.

John Webster, of whose personal history little is known, was clerk of St. Andrews, Holborn. He wrote plays in conjunction with Dekker, Middleton, Heywood, and other dramatists, the most celebrated of those written by himself being the tragedies

of *The Duchess of Malfi*, and *The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona*. For dramatic skill and imaginative power, but particularly in his command over the commingled emotions of terror and pity, Webster ranks high among the Shakspearian group.

FROM "THE WHITE DEVIL."

FUNERAL DIRGE.

Call for the robin-redbreast and the wren,
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robbed) sustain no harm;
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.

## JOHN FORD—1586-1639.

John Ford followed in London the profession of a lawyer, thus possessing over most of his brother dramatists the advantage of being independent of his success as an author for his sustenance. He stands among the foremost of the secondary group of the Elizabethan dramatists.

## JAMES SHIRLEY—1596-1666.

Shirley has already been mentioned as the last of the old dramatists. He was born in London, and attended the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. While at the former, the celebrated Archbishop Laud refused to ordain him, on account of a mole on his cheek! His life was one of unusual vicissitude. At first a curate of the English Church, he subsequently embraced the Roman Catholic religion, and became a schoolmaster. Next, we find him a dramatic writer in London; and afterwards, on the breaking out of the civil war, a soldier under the royal banner. In his old age he was driven forth on the world with his wife and family, in consequence of the great fire of 1666; and both himself

and his wife died in a few days afterwards. His plays are more distinguished for the beauty of detached passages than for strong delineation of character or intensity of passion.

## MINOR DRAMATISTS.

Kyd, Heywood, Chettle, Middleton, Marston, Randolph, Dekker, &c.

*The Spanish Tragedy*, (1599) by THOMAS KYD, is said to have gone through more editions than any play of the time. THOMAS HEYWOOD was the most prolific of the minor dramatists of this period, having, according to his own statement, had a share in the composition of two hundred and twenty plays. Of those entirely written by himself, *A Woman Killed with Kindness* is the most admired. The dates of his birth and death are unknown; but he flourished in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. HENRY CHETTLE was the reputed author of forty plays, from 1597 to 1602. The best of his pieces is the drama of *Patient Grissell*. THOMAS MIDDLETON wrote about twenty plays, including *A Mad World, my Masters*, and *The Roaring Girl;* the latter of which is esteemed for its picture of contemporary manners. He is supposed to have died about 1626. JOHN MARSTON was the coadjutor of Jonson and Chapman in the comedy of *Eastward Hoe;* for which the authors were imprisoned, on account of its satirical remarks upon the Scotch nation. His quarrel with Ben Jonson has been alluded to in the biographical sketch of the latter. Marston wrote several plays, and was a popular author in his day. THOMAS RANDOLPH (1605–1635) was a versatile and witty writer, his works comprising poems and translations, besides plays; the best of which is *The Muses' Looking-Glass*. Of the plays of THOMAS DEKKER, who wrote in conjunction with John Webster, the best is *Fortunatus, or the Wishing Cap*. He was a vigorous prose writer, and Lamb says of him that "he had poetry enough for anything." His literary connection with Ben Jonson, and the circumstances in which it terminated, have been already alluded to. He is supposed to have died about 1638.

SONG FROM HEYWOOD.

Pack, clouds, away, and welcome day;
With night we banish sorrow:
Sweet air, blow soft; mount, lark aloft,
To give my love good-morrow:
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark I'll borrow:
Bird, prune thy wing; nightingale, sing,
To give my love good-morrow.
To give my love good-morrow,
Notes from them all I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, robin-redbreast;
Sing, birds, in every furrow;
And from each bill let music shrill
Give my fair love good-morrow.
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow,
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
Sing my fair love good-morrow.
To give my love good-morrow,
Sing, birds, in every furrow.

# CHAPTER V.

## PROSE WRITERS.

### INTRODUCTION.

The Bible—Theological writers—The new philosophy—Bacon—Hobbes—Controversial writings during the civil war—Geographical writers—General style of the period—Various sources of vocabulary.

THE current of contemporary history is more clearly indicated by the prose than by the poetry of this period. The various translations of the Bible were intimately connected with the Reformation; and the present authorized edition ranks as one of the most important standards of our tongue, for purity and noble simplicity of style. The establishment of a new hierarchy naturally gave birth to a great variety of theological and polemical writings, of which the *Ecclesiastical Polity* of Hooker, the sermons of Taylor and Hall, and the controversial works of Usher, Chillingworth, and Hales, are amongst the most distinguished. During the Middle Ages the scholastic philosophy had been rendered subservient to the maintenance of the dogmas of the Church, not only in speculative discussion, but even in questions capable of scientific demonstration; and the religious movement was soon to be followed by as sweeping a change in the philosophy of science. It is one of the proudest trophies of the national genius that this revolution is so intimately associated with the works of Bacon, who, in the felicitous language of the poet, was made by Nature and a King—

"Lord Chancellor of both their laws."

In an age when the human intellect seemed to have attained its most majestic proportions, an age crowded with men whose lives constitute epochs, the greatest names have been eclipsed by that of the "Father of Experimental Philosophy."

In the succeeding generation the renowned Hobbes exercised nearly as powerful an influence on the mind of Europe by his

bold and original system of speculative philosophy. In *The Leviathan*, his celebrated treatise on civil government, he advocates the divine right of kings, but rather in the spirit of a philosopher than a political partisan. This work, and some of a more controversial kind by which it had been preceded, such as the *Ikonoclastes* of Milton, and his *Defence of the People of England*, are sufficiently suggestive of the agitating and momentous events with which these great writers were contemporary.

The progress of geographical discovery was not without its influence on the literature as well as the language of this period. The voyages, travels, and discoveries recorded by such writers as Hakluyt and Purchas; the original narratives of the navigator Davis; and the epistolary descriptions of Howell, while they augmented the vocabulary, admitted of a picturesque style, with greater freedom and familiarity of diction than is to be found in other prose writings of the period.

It remains to be observed of the prose style of this period, that, as a general characteristic, the structure of the sentences is cumbrous and involved, and more conformable to the Latin than the Saxon idiom; fine passages are frequently marred by the introduction of colloquial or vulgar expressions; and there was a frequent tendency to adopt foreign terms, particularly those of Latin origin, that the language has refused to naturalize. A permanent accession of vocables was nevertheless derived from the Latin as well as from the Greek, which had now become an indispensable branch of classical learning; while French and Italian also materially contributed to enrich our vocabulary.

# CHAPTER VI.

## AUTHORS AND WORKS.

Lord Bacon—Sir Walter Raleigh—Sir Philip Sidney—Richard Hooker—Jeremy Taylor—Sir Thomas Overbury—Thomas Fuller—Joseph Hall—Sir Thomas Browne—Thomas Hobbes—John Milton—Minor and miscellaneous writers—Translation of the Scriptures.

### FRANCIS BACON—1561-1626.

Francis Bacon, born in London in 1561, was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. At an early age he gave very striking manifestations of the inquiring and reflective tendency of his mind; and, on account of his sedate and thoughtful demeanour, Queen Elizabeth was in the habit of calling him her young lord-keeper. Being sent to Cambridge, he, at the age of sixteen, imbibed a strong dislike to the course of study there prevalent; and if he did not at that time plan his *Novum Organum*, as has been alleged, he at least must have been revolving in his mind the new method of philosophical study which was afterwards matured in that celebrated work. On leaving Cambridge he visited Paris; and while in France wrote, at the age of nineteen, his work, *Of the State of Europe*. On his return to England he applied himself to the study of the law; and in 1592, after his professional skill had been acknowledged by various promotions, he was returned to Parliament for Middlesex, where he at once distinguished himself by his weighty and commanding eloquence. At this time the fatal defect of his character, the subordination of all other considerations to that of his personal aggrandizement, very ominously displayed itself. Having in one of his speeches ventured to oppose the Government in a demand for subsidies, he highly offended the Queen and her ministers; and fearing that such a course might mar his advancement to power, he condescended to make the most abject apologies. It would be pleasant to say that this was the worst example of his devotedness to the pursuit of royal favour; but a much darker

one remains to be recorded. The Earl of Essex, whose unfortunate expedition to Ireland, followed by his rash and ill-advised enterprise in London, is well known, had been his zealous patron and munificent benefactor; and Bacon, it is admitted, endeavoured to mediate between the Queen and her disgraced favourite, but only so long as there was no danger of compromising his own interests. At the Queen's instance, he not only appeared as public prosecutor against the Earl, but, incredible as it may appear, actually endeavoured by rhetorical amplification to exaggerate his guilt, and deprive him of all sympathy. The conduct of Bacon towards Essex has lately given rise to much controversy; some writers having endeavoured, with indifferent success, to acquit him of the charge of ingratitude, and to prove that, in the whole of this transaction, he was only actuated by patriotism and a sense of duty. After the accession of James I. he obtained the long-coveted dignity of Chancellor, and remained in high favour at Court, until various acts of bribery alleged against him became the subject of an inquiry by the House of Commons. It was proved that on at least twenty-four occasions he had accepted sums of money from litigants, for the purpose of procuring a decision in their favour; and having confessed his guilt, he was disgraced from his high office and banished from public life. Although his sentence was afterwards commuted, and he was in some measure restored to favour, he devoted the remainder of his life to scientific experiments, and died at Highgate in 1626. In his will were these remarkable words: "My name and memory I leave to foreign nations, and to my own countrymen after some time be passed over." The moral and intellectual character of Bacon is summed up by Pope in the well-known line which describes him as "the wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind." To the extent of the praise, at least, it must be admitted that in this instance truth is not sacrificed to effect; for never has the human intellect coped with a mightier undertaking, or achieved more brilliant results, than those which have earned for him the title of "Father of Experimental Philosophy." But Bacon's is the triple fame of the philosopher, the writer, and the orator. As a thinker, he stands alone for depth,

grasp, and originality; and his style is permeated by the fire and adorned with the luxuriance of a highly poetical imagination. His oratory is said to have indicated all the gifts of his genius.

For an analysis of the Baconian or Inductive Philosophy, we refer our readers to Hallam's *Introduction to the Literature of Europe;* and for a more concise and popular one, to the *History of Philosophy* by G. H. Lewes. The object of that philosophy was to establish science upon the basis of observation and experience, in opposition to the scholastic or authoritative method of study, and to render it productive of practical results and material benefit to mankind. Utility and progress have therefore been justly attributed to it as its leading principles. "In science," says Bacon, "the true end is to enrich human life with new discoveries and wealth." The Baconian logic, which he describes as "the science of a better and more perfect use of reason in the investigation of things, and of the true aids of the understanding," is explained in the *Novum Organum* (*i.e.*, New Method), the second part of his great work called *Instauratio Scientiarum*, or "Instauration of the Sciences." The first part was entitled *De Augmentis Scientiarum;* and both parts were written in the Latin language. The first part, however, is an enlargement of a work he had published in English in 1605, entitled *The Advancement of Learning.* The *Novum Organum* appeared in 1620. His *Essays* are the most popular and not the least characteristic of his works; and he wrote a *History of King Henry VII.*

### STUDIES.

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business: for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots, and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humour of a scholar: they perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them;

for they teach not their own use, but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others: but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man: and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not.

## SIR WALTER RALEIGH—1552-1618.

The career of this highly gifted man, who combined in himself the genius of the poet, the navigator and discoverer, the able warrior by sea and land, the historian, the philosopher, and the orator, is widely associated with the literary and political history of his time. At a period of our history so fruitful in great men, Sir Walter Raleigh, for strength of character and versatility of genius, is not surpassed, if not unequalled, by the greatest of his contemporaries.

He was born at Hayes in Devonshire, of a good family, in 1552, and after having studied at the University of Oxford, his active and adventurous disposition led him to the Continent, where for several years he served as a volunteer in France and the Netherlands. As a sailor, he may be said to have served his apprenticeship in an attempt to found a colony in North America in 1579; and in the year following he accompanied Lord Deputy Grey to Ireland, where he commanded a company of the troops engaged in suppressing the great Desmond rebellion. Spenser the poet, being in the Deputy's suite, was present with Raleigh at the massacre of a Spanish garrison that had surrendered unconditionally the previous day; an act of which it is feared Raleigh cannot escape from a share of the odium. On his return to London, after having been made Governor of Cork, he became an assiduous courtier; and his talent for business, combined with his

readiness of wit and irresistible address, soon recommended him to the favour of Elizabeth. As an instance of his tact, it is related that on one occasion, while her majesty was walking in public, he took a rich velvet cloak from his shoulders, and placed it in her way on the miry ground, so that she might not soil her feet. He had not been long at Court before he was knighted by the Queen, who also made him captain of the guard, and besides conferring upon him a patent and other lucrative appointments, rewarded him with a handsome grant out of the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond. In 1585 he went with a body of colonists to North America; and the fruit of the expedition was, subsequently, the importation of tobacco and potatoes into England for the first time, the colony receiving the name of Virginia, in honour of Elizabeth. In 1588 he distinguished himself greatly in the various actions which took place with the Spanish Armada; in 1589 he accompanied Drake and Norris on their expedition to Portugal; and in 1595 again set sail on a voyage of discovery to America, where he ascended the Orinoco for sixty leagues, and on his return to England published a glowing account of the empire of Guiana, (the El Dorado of his waking dreams,) the interior of which he fancied to be a region of inexhaustible riches.

The death of Elizabeth proved fatal to the fortunes of Raleigh. The wily and jealous Cecil poisoned the mind of James against him; and Raleigh was seized on pretence of a treasonous plot, and his estates forfeited. The skill with which he baffled the lawyers at their own weapons, the intrepidity with which he repelled their attempts to brow-beat him, and the eloquence with which he defended himself from the charge, excited universal sympathy and admiration. An obsequious jury found him guilty, and he was condemned to death; but the Court being apparently ashamed to carry the sentence into effect, he was respited and sent to the Tower. During his long imprisonment he devoted himself to literature, and, besides other smaller pieces, wrote the first part of his *History of the World*,—a work which he never completed.

In 1615, after having been thirteen years in prison, he was conditionally released, having engaged to open a mine in Guiana,

from which he expected untold wealth. The needy King, tempted by the prospect of sharing in the prize, permitted him to fit out an expedition; and he accordingly equipped a fleet of thirteen vessels, with which he made his last voyage to the shores of the New World. The expedition ended in disaster. Long confinement had rendered him unable to ascend the Orinoco with his followers; a conflict took place with the Spaniards at St. Thomas, in which his son was killed; his crew mutinied; and he was forced to return to England. The Spanish Ambassador demanding vengeance for the attack on St. Thomas, and James being desirous to propitiate Spain on account of the contemplated marriage of his son Charles to the Infanta, Raleigh was apprehended shortly after his arrival at Plymouth; and with a meanness and atrocity not surpassed in the annals of this miserable reign, he was condemned to death on a sentence that had been passed sixteen years before, and in consequence of which he had suffered thirteen years of confinement. He was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1618, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

Sir Walter Raleigh was by no means free from the vices of the Court at which he lived. He was intensely ambitious of distinction; eager, if not rapacious, in the acquisition of wealth, and incurred great popular odium from his practice of accepting bribes; but his worst action was his complicity with Cecil in accomplishing the ruin of Essex. He was accused of haughtiness, and made many enemies by the energy and self-reliance with which he pushed aside weaker natures on his path to advancement. His tall, handsome person, bespoke all the manhood of his character; and he is described in a rhyming couplet on his name as "the gentleman with the bold face." There is sufficient evidence, however, that adversity had softened the more unpleasing traits of his disposition; and in his last moments his characteristic intrepidity was tempered by a spirit of forgiveness and pious resignation.

Raleigh's poetry, which consists entirely of short pieces, possesses all the sweetness, ease, and simplicity of the true Elizabethan type. Besides his principal work, *The History of the World*, which is esteemed one of the best specimens of the prose

of that period, and is admitted to surpass in style all its predecessors on the same subject, he wrote *Maxims of State*, *Advice to his Son*, and others of a similar nature.

### SIR PHILIP SIDNEY—1554–1586.

Sir Philip Sidney is one of the darlings of history. Gifted by nature with a fine person, a poetical genius, and a chivalrous disposition, he became at an early age one of the most brilliant ornaments of the Court of Elizabeth. He was the son of Sir Henry Sidney, and was born at Penshurst in Kent,—a name rendered familiar to the student of poetry by many associations. His mother was Mary, eldest daughter of John Duke of Northumberland, and sister of Robert Dudley, the famous, or, at least, notorious Earl of Leicester, whose character presents so striking a contrast, both as regards intellect and morals, to that of his illustrious nephew. The resemblance in certain particulars between the life of Sidney and that of the less fortunate Surrey deserves a passing notice. Both were poets of noble birth, and had studied the same models; both were pre-eminent in graceful and martial accomplishments; Surrey was the devoted knight of the fair "Geraldine," whose beauty he sung in his verses and was ready to vindicate with his lance; the love and the poetry of Sidney were consecrated to her whom he has celebrated under the name of "Stella." Both had visited and attracted the admiration of foreign courts, and on their return were honoured with distinction and favour at that of their sovereign. But here the parallel ceases. Neither royal caprice nor malignant rivalry clouded the fortune of Sidney, whose presence the Queen found to be indispensable at her Court. His quarrel with the Earl of Oxford while they were playing at tennis led to his temporary retirement to the country, having spiritedly refused the injunctions of his royal mistress to make what he considered an unworthy concession to that haughty peer. In 1585, having indicated some intention of joining the second expedition of Sir Francis Drake against the Spaniards, the Queen peremptorily forbade his embarkation, "lest she should lose the jewel of her dominions;"

but in the same year she nevertheless appointed him Governor of Flushing, which had been given to the English for the assistance they had rendered the inhabitants of the Netherlands in their struggle with the Spaniards. At Zutphen an engagement took place in which Sir Philip, behaving with his accustomed gallantry, received a musket wound in the thigh. The incident which took place on this occasion, though often told, is so illustrative of his character that it cannot be here omitted. As he was borne from the field of battle, faint and thirsty from loss of blood, he called for drink, and while putting the bottle to his mouth, a poor soldier who was carried past in a dying state cast upon it a wistful glance. Sir Philip, before drinking himself, handed the bottle to the soldier with these words, "Thy necessity is greater than mine." A few days afterwards he died at Arnheim, in 1586, in the thirty-third year of his age.

The sonnets of Sidney are regarded as amongst the best of their kind. He was termed by Raleigh "the English Petrarch;" but his fame as a writer depends more upon his prose works, the principal of which are *The Arcadia*, a heroic romance, and *The Defence of Poesie*. The first of these enjoyed unbounded popularity for a century after the death of its author, and must, consequently, have produced no slight influence upon the national taste; but the prolixity which characterized the romantic fiction of that age can be endured by no modern reader. *The Arcadia* is, however, admitted to possess many beauties of thought and style, which could only emanate from a highly refined and poetical imagination. *The Defence of Poesie*, which is especially interesting as one of our earliest specimens of literary criticism, is considered the best work that could have been written on the subject.

### DESCRIPTION OF ARCADIA.

There were hills which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; humble valleys, whose base estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows, enamelled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers; thickets, which, being lined with most pleasant shade, were witnessed so to by the cheerful disposition of many well-tuned birds; each pasture stored with sheep, feeding with sober security; while the pretty lambs, with bleating oratory, craved the

dam's comfort: here a shepherd's boy piping, as though he should never be old; there, a young shepherdess knitting, and withal singing; and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice-music.

## RICHARD HOOKER—1553-1600.

Richard Hooker was born near Exeter, and after having been for some years master of the Temple, successively held the rectorships of Boscomb in Wilts and Bishop's Bourne in Kent. He was remarkable for piety and gentleness of disposition. His treatise on *Ecclesiastical Polity*, written in defence of the constitution and discipline of the Church of England, is "one of the master-pieces of English eloquence."

### MUSICAL HARMONY.

Touching musical harmony, whether by instrument or by voice, it being but of high and low in sounds a due proportionable disposition, such notwithstanding is the force thereof, and so pleasing effects it hath in that very part of man which is most divine, that some have been thereby induced to think that the soul itself by nature is, or hath in it, harmony; a thing which delighteth all ages, and beseemeth all states; a thing as seasonable in grief as in joy; as decent being added unto actions of greatest weight and solemnity, as being used when men most sequester themselves from action. The reason hereof is, an admirable facility which music hath to express and represent to the mind, more inwardly than any other sensible mean, the very standing, rising, and falling, the very steps and inflections every way, the turns and varieties of all passions whereunto the mind is subject; yea, so to imitate them, that, whether it resemble unto us the same state wherein our minds already are, or a clean contrary, we are not more contentedly by the one confirmed than changed and led away by the other. In harmony, the very image and character even of virtue and vice is perceived, the mind delighted with their resemblances, and brought, by having them often iterated, into a love of the things themselves. For which cause there is nothing more contagious and pestilent than some kinds of harmony; than some, nothing more strong and potent unto good. And that there is such a difference of one kind from another, we need no proof but our own experience, inasmuch as we are at the hearing of some more inclined unto sorrow and heaviness; of some, more mollified and softened in mind; one kind apter to stay and settle us, another to move and stir our affections: there is that draweth to a marvellous grave and sober mediocrity; there is also that carrieth as it were into ecstasies, filling the mind with a heavenly joy, and for the time in a manner severing it from the body. So that, although we lay altogether aside the consideration of ditty[1] or matter, the very harmony of sounds being framed in due sort, and carried from

[1] That is, the subject, the words of the song.

the ear to the spiritual faculties of our souls, is, by a native puissance and efficacy, greatly available to bring to a perfect temper whatsoever is there troubled; apt as well to quicken the spirits as to allay that which is too eager; sovereign against melancholy and despair; forcible to draw forth tears of devotion, if the mind be such as can yield them; able both to move and to moderate all affections.

### JEREMY TAYLOR—1613-1667.

Jeremy Taylor was born at Cambridge, and at the age of thirteen became a sizer at the university of his native town. His talents attracted the notice of Archbishop Laud, by whose influence he obtained a fellowship at Oxford; and shortly afterwards he was appointed to the rectory of Uppingham. Having attached himself to the King's party on the breaking out of the civil war, his living was sequestrated by Parliament; but after the Restoration he was made Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, and spent the remainder of his life in the zealous discharge of his pastoral duties.

Taylor was a voluminous devotional and theological writer. His *Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying* (that is, Preaching) was "the first famous plea in this country for religious toleration on a comprehensive basis, and on deep-seated foundations." As a preacher, he had no equal among his predecessors, his sermons being distinguished for intense fervour, for profusion of illustration and poetical ornament, and for the startling and irresistible force of his appeals to the feelings and imagination. When the occasion is such as to call forth his full powers, his eloquence may truly be said to burn like a consuming fire. His style is nevertheless marked by the defects peculiar to the time, his sentences being frequently cumbrous and inartistic, and his fertility apt to degenerate into prolixity. His *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, and a collection of Meditations called the *Golden Grove*, are amongst the most celebrated of his works.

#### THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

Consider what an infinite multitude of angels and men and women shall then appear! It is a huge assembly when the men of one kingdom, the men of one age in a single province, are gathered together into heaps and confusion of dis-

order; but then, all kingdoms of all ages, all the armies that ever mustered, all that world that Augustus Cesar taxed, all those hundreds of millions that were slain in all the Roman wars, from Numa's time till Italy was broken into principalities and small exarchates: all these, and all that can come into numbers, and that did descend from the loins of Adam, shall at once be represented; to which account if we add the armies of Heaven, the nine orders of blessed spirits, and the infinite numbers in every order, we may suppose the numbers fit to express the majesty of that God, and the terror of that Judge, who is the Lord and Father of all that unimaginable multitude! . . . . . The sea, they say, shall rise fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, and thence descend into hollowness and a prodigious drought; and when they are reduced again to their usual proportions, then all the beasts and creeping things, the monsters and the usual inhabitants of the sea, shall be gathered together, and make fearful noises to distract mankind; the birds shall mourn, and change their song into threnes and sad accents; rivers of fire shall rise from east to west, and the stars shall be rent into threads of light, and scatter like the beards of comets: then shall be fearful earthquakes, and the rocks shall rend in pieces, the trees shall distil blood, and the mountains and fairest structures shall return into their primitive dust; the wild beasts shall leave their dens, and shall come into the companies of men, so that you shall hardly tell how to call them, herds of men, or congregations of beasts: then shall the graves open and give up their dead, and those which are alive in nature, and dead in fear, shall be forced from the rocks, whither they went to hide them, and from caverns of the earth, where they would fain have been concealed; because their retirements are dismantled, and their rocks are broken into wider ruptures, and admit a strange light into their secret bowels: and the men being forced abroad into the theatre of mighty horrors, shall run up and down distracted, and at their wits' end; and then some shall die, and some shall be changed; and by this time the elect shall be gathered together from the four quarters of the world; and Christ shall come along with them to judgment.

## SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

The poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury in 1613 by his patron and associate, Carr, the royal favourite, and the Countess of Exeter, is one of those events that disgrace the reign of James I. The following extract is from his *Characters*:—

### THE FAIR AND HAPPY MILKMAID.

The fair and happy milkmaid is a country wench, that is so far from making herself beautiful by art, that one look of hers is able to put all face-physic out of countenance. She knows a fair look is but a dumb orator to commend virtue, therefore minds it not. All her excellences stand in her so silently as if they had stolen upon her without her knowledge. The lining of her apparel, which is herself, is far better than outsides of tissue; for though she be not arrayed in

the spoil of the silk-worm, she is decked in innocence, a far better wearing. She doth not, with lying long in bed, spoil both her complexion and conditions: nature hath taught her, too, immoderate sleep is rust to the soul; she rises therefore with Chanticleer, her dame's cock, *and at night makes the lamb her curfew.* In milking a cow, and straining the teats through her fingers, it seems that so sweet a milk-press makes the milk whiter or sweeter; for never came almond-glore or aromatic ointment on her palm to taint it. The golded ears of corn fall and kiss her feet, when she reaps them, as if they wished to be bound and led prisoners by the same hand that felled them. Her breath is her own, which scents all the year long of June, like a new-made hay-cock. She makes her hand hard with labour, and her heart soft with pity; and when winter evenings fall early, sitting at her merry wheel she sings defiance to the giddy wheel of Fortune. She doth all things with so sweet a grace, it seems ignorance will not suffer her to do ill, being her mind is to do well. She bestows her year's wages at next fair, and in choosing her garments, counts no bravery in the world like decency. The garden and bee-hive are all her physic and surgery; and she lives the longer for it. She dares go alone, and unfold sheep in the night, and fears no manner of ill, because she means none; yet, to say truth, she is never alone, but is still accompanied with old songs, honest thoughts, and prayers, but short ones; yet they have their efficacy, in that they are not palled with ensuing idle cogitations. Lastly, her dreams are so chaste, that she dare tell them: only a Friday's dream is all her superstition; that she conceals for fear of anger. Thus lives she; and all her care is, she may die in the spring-time, to have store of flowers stuck upon her winding-sheet.

## THOMAS FULLER—1608–1661.

*The Worthies of England*, and *The Profane and Holy States*, are the best known of this witty divine's works. He was one of the royalist chaplains during the civil war, and obtained materials for the *Worthies* by personal inquiries, as the army marched through the various counties. After the Restoration he was appointed chaplain to Charles II. He excelled in description of character and in striking apothegms.

### BOOKS.[1]

Some books are only cursorily to be tasted of: namely, first, voluminous books, the task of a man's life to read them over; secondly, auxiliary books, only to be repaired to on occasions; thirdly, such as are mere pieces of formality, so that if you look on them you look through them, and he that peeps through the casement of the index sees as much as if he were in the house. But the laziness of those cannot be excused who perfunctorily pass over authors of consequence, and only trade in their tables and contents. These, like city-cheaters, having

[1] Compare with extract from Bacon, p. 198.

gotten the names of all country gentlemen, make silly people believe they have long lived in those places where they never were, and flourish with skill in those authors they never seriously studied.

### JOSEPH HALL—1574-1656.

The merits of this writer as a poet have already been mentioned; and he ranks with Hooker and Taylor as one of the masters of English eloquence. Between the style of the latter and his own there is a considerable resemblance. The best known of his prose works are his *Occasional Meditations*, and *Characters of Virtues and Vices*. Being a vigorous defender of royalist and episcopal principles, he fell a victim to the retaliatory persecution of the parliamentary party; and having been ejected from his bishopric (of Norwich) after his cathedral was destroyed, he died in poverty in the eighty-second year of his age.

#### UPON THE SIGHT OF AN OWL IN THE TWILIGHT.

What a strange melancholic life doth this creature lead; to hide her head all the day long in an ivy bush; and at night, when all other birds are at rest, to fly abroad and vent her harsh notes! I know not why the ancients have sacred[1] this bird to Wisdom, except it be for her safe closeness and singular perspicuity; that when other domestical and airy creatures are blind, she only hath inward light, to discern the least objects for her own advantage. Surely thus much wit they have taught us in her: that he is the wisest man that would have least to do with the multitude; that no life is so safe as the obscure; that retiredness, if it have less comfort, yet has less danger and vexation; lastly, that he is truly wise who sees by a light of his own, when the rest of the world sit in an ignorant and confused darkness, unable to apprehend any truth save by the helps of an outward illumination.

Had this fowl come forth in the daytime, how had all the little birds flocked wondering about her, to see her uncouth visage, to hear her untuned notes! She likes her estate never the worse, but pleaseth herself in her own quiet reservedness: it is not for a wise man to be much affected with the censures of the rude and unskilful vulgar, but to hold fast unto his own well-chosen and well-fixed resolutions: every fool knows what is wont to be done; but what is best to be done is known only to the wise.

### SIR THOMAS BROWNE—1605-1682.

In the department of polite letters Sir Thomas Browne is probably more read at the present day than any other of the older prose writers. His style, which is highly Latinized, undoubtedly

[1] *i.e.*, consecrated.

exercised a great influence upon that of Dr. Johnson, who wrote his biography, and edited a portion of his works, of which he was a great admirer. His writings are distinguished by a vast display of curious and recondite learning, but still more by originality and richness of imagination, together with depth and beauty of reflection. His principal works are the *Religio Medici*, *Hydriotaphia or Urn-burial*, and *Inquiries into Vulgar or Common Errors;* but he also wrote various treatises on natural history and antiquarian topics.

Sir Thomas Browne was the son of a merchant of good means in London, was born there, and educated at Oxford, where he graduated and studied medicine. He travelled through France and Italy, and having been made doctor of medicine at Leyden, settled at Norwich, and there spent the remainder of his life in the practice of his profession. He was knighted by Charles II. in 1671.

### OBLIVION.

Oblivion is not to be hired: the greatest part must be content to be as though they had not been; to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven names make up the first story before the Flood; and the recorded names ever since contain not one living century. The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day; and who knows when was the equinox? Every hour adds unto that current arithmetic, which scarce stands one moment. And since Death must be the Lucina of life, and even pagans could doubt whether thus to live were to die; since our longest sun sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darkness, and have our light in ashes; since the brother of Death daily haunts us with dying mementoes, and time, that grows old in itself, bids us hope no long duration: diuturnity is a dream and folly of expectation.

## THOMAS HOBBES—1588-1679.

Thomas Hobbes was born at Malmesbury in 1588. He studied at Oxford, and after travelling on the Continent in the capacity of tutor to the Earl of Devonshire, became that nobleman's secretary on his return to England. During the civil war, he found it expedient to retire to Paris, where he became mathematical instructor of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles II., who, on the Restoration, conferred upon him a pension of £100 a year. He

spent the latter period of his life at Chatsworth, the seat of the noble family under whose auspices he had begun his career, and died at the great age of ninety-two. He enjoyed the friendship of the most famous men of his time, including Selden and Jonson, and was employed by Lord Bacon in translating his works into English. Confident in the strength and originality of his genius, he was arrogant and dogmatic in his temper, resembling not a little the great dramatist just named, in the contempt he entertained for those who contradicted his opinions. In discussions respecting philosophy he was an irresistible opponent; but having at the age of forty engaged in the study of mathematics, he fancied he had discovered the quadrature of the circle; and although clearly refuted by Dr. Wallis, professor of geometry at Oxford, he characteristically refused to acknowledge his defeat. From such an idiosyncrasy a love of paradox is almost inseparable; and it was one of his sayings that, "if he had read as much as other men, he would have been as ignorant as they." This maxim he is said to have exemplified in practice, his favourite authors being Homer, Virgil, Thucydides, and Euclid. The principal works of Hobbes are his *Leviathan*, embracing metaphysical and political treatises, which had at first been written in Latin; and his translation of Thucydides, the Greek historian. He also rendered Homer into English verse; but his mind was by no means poetical, and his efforts in that field proved unsuccessful. His political and ethical theories having been referred to in the introduction to this section: it is here sufficient to state, that he was the advocate of absolute monarchy; that he affirms self-love to be the motive of all human action; and that good and evil are merely arbitrary and relative terms. It is more within the scope of the present work to indicate his literary merits than to discuss the character of his philosophy; and for that purpose we shall quote the estimate of an acute and vigorous writer who has ably analyzed him under both aspects:—"Impartial minds will always rank Hobbes amongst the greatest writers England has produced; and by writers we do not simply mean masters of language, but also masters of thought. He is profound, and he is clear, weighty, and sparkling. His style, as mere style, is in its

way as fine as anything in English : it has the clearness of crystal, and it has also the solidity and brilliancy. Nor is the matter unworthy of this form. It is original, in the sense of having been passed through the alembic of his brain, even when perhaps the property of others. Although little of it could now appear novel, it was novel when he produced it."[1]

### IMPORTANCE OF DEFINITIONS.

Seeing that truth consisteth in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeketh precise truth had need to remember what every name he useth stands for, and to place it accordingly, or else he will find himself entangled in words, as a bird in lime twigs—the more he struggles, the more belimed. And therefore in geometry, which is the only science that it hath pleased God hitherto to bestow on mankind, men begin at settling the significations of their words; which settling of significations they call definitions, and place them in the beginning of their reckoning.

By this it appears how necessary it is for any man that aspires to true knowledge to examine the definitions of former authors; and either to correct them where they are negligently set down, or to make them himself. For the errors of definitions multiply themselves according as the reckoning proceeds, and lead men into absurdities, which at last they see, but cannot avoid without reckoning anew from the beginning, in which lies the foundation of their errors. From whence it happens that they which trust to books do as they that cast up many little sums into a greater, without considering whether those little sums were rightly cast up or not; and at last, finding the error visible, and not mistrusting their first grounds, know not which way to clear themselves, but spend time in fluttering over their books, as birds that, entering by the chimney, flutter at the false light of a glass window, for want of wit to consider which way they came in. So that in the right definition of names lies the first use of speech, which is the acquisition of science; and in wrong or no definitions lies the first abuse; from which proceed all false and senseless tenets, which make those men that take their instruction from the authority of books, and not from their own meditation, to be as much below the condition of ignorant men, as men endued with true science are above it. For between true science and erroneous doctrines ignorance is in the middle. Natural sense and imagination are not subject to absurdity. Nature itself cannot err; and as men abound in copiousness of language, so they become more wise or more mad than ordinary. Nor is it possible, without letters, for any man to become either excellently[2] wise or, unless his memory be hurt by disease or ill constitution of organs, excellently foolish. For words are wise men's counters—they do but reckon by them; but they are the money of fools, that value them by the authority of an Aristotle, a Cicero, or a Thomas,[3] or any other doctor whatsoever, if but a man.

[1] Biographical History of Philosophy, by G. H. Lewes.
[2] Extraordinarily. [3] Thomas Aquinas.

### JOHN MILTON.

*Areopagitica, a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing,* and a *Tractate on Education,* are the most esteemed of Milton's prose works; and although by no means of uniform excellence, they abound in passages of sublime eloquence. His controversial writings, some of which are in Latin, are numerous; and he wrote a History of England to the time of the Norman Conquest. His prose, like his great poem, is distinctively classical and foreign in structure and style. The circumstances under which he wrote *Ikonoclastes* are mentioned in the notice of John Gauden, p. 213.

### MINOR AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITERS.

As a scholar, antiquary, linguist, and statesman, JOHN SELDEN (1584–1654) holds a prominent place both in the political and the literary history of his country. In the Long Parliament he represented the University of Oxford, and was appointed one of the lay members of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, on whose discussions his vast erudition enabled him to exercise great influence. He is now most popularly known as a writer by his *Table Talk.* The *Anatomy of Melancholy* by ROBERT BURTON (1576–1639) is thus described by Warton:—"The author's variety of learning, his quotations from scarce and curious books, his pedantry sparkling with rude wit and shapeless elegance, miscellaneous matter, intermixture of agreeable tales and illustrations, and perhaps above all, the singularities of his feelings, clothed in an uncommon quaintness of style, have contributed to render it, even to modern readers, a valuable repository of amusement and information." Sterne appropriated without acknowledgment many passages from Burton. Another curious book that belongs to this period is a work by OWEN FELTHAM, entitled *The Resolves,* consisting of moral and religious essays. It was published in 1628. The fame of ISAAC WALTON (1593–1683) rests upon *The Complete Angler,* published in 1653,—a work that exhibits, in easy, graceful, and simple prose, the charms of pastoral

poetry, mixed with devout reflection. He was the friend and biographer of Dr. Donne; and he also wrote the lives of Archbishop Hooker and George Herbert.

William Chillingworth (1602–1644) was Chancellor of Salisbury and Prebendary of Brixworth. Of the work upon which his fame rests, *The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation*, it will be sufficient to quote the opinion of Locke:—"The reading of him will teach perspicuity and the right way of reasoning better than any book I know."

James Usher, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland (1581–1656), one of the most learned of theologians, was distinguished for the zeal and ability with which he combated the doctrines of Popery. He is now, however, best remembered for his great chronological work, *Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, or *Annals of the Old and New Testaments*, published between 1650 and 1654, and which is still the standard of authority on that subject.

John Hales (1584–1656) rivalled Chillingworth as the intrepid champion of toleration in religious belief. His abhorrence of bigotry and advocacy of a more comprehensive union of professing Christians are set forth in his *Tract concerning Schism and Schismatics.*

John Gauden (1605–1662) is now generally admitted to have been the author of the famous *Ikon Basilike, or the Portraiture of his Most Sacred Majesty in his Solitude and Sufferings*,—a work which, shortly after the death of Charles I., professed to be a genuine literary relic of that monarch. The assumption of meekness and piety by the simulated author excited a feeling of universal compassion in his favour; the popularity of the book was unprecedented; and it is admitted to have had a powerful influence on political events. It was answered by Milton in his *Ikonoclastes;* that is, *The Image Breaker.*

Richard Baxter (1615–1691), the celebrated nonconformist divine, and author of *The Saints' Everlasting Rest* and *A Call to the Unconverted*, has by these works secured a more lasting popularity than most of his contemporaries. His posthumous *Narra-*

*tive of his Life and Times* has been highly esteemed by some of the most eminent critics.

John Stow (1525–1605) was the author of the *Survey of London*, published in 1598, *Summary of English Chronicles*, and *Annals of England*. After spending his long life in this laborious and useful service, he fell into poverty, and received from the royal bounty of James I. a license to beg at church doors and other public places!

From Holinshed's *Chronicle* Shakspeare drew his materials for his dramas of Richard II. and Macbeth, some of the passages in the former being nearly literally transcribed.

The *Britannia* of William Camden (1551–1623), a topographical account of England, and annals of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are of high antiquarian and historical authority. They were originally written in Latin, but were translated into English. This erudite and esteemed author was head master of Westminster School.

Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1581–1648) wrote a *History of the Life and Reign of King Henry VIII.*, which is regarded even at the present day as a master-piece of style.

Richard Knolles (died 1610) wrote a *History of the Turks*, which was highly praised by Johnson.

Richard Hakluyt (1553–1616) was a lecturer on cosmography, as geography was then termed, in the University of Oxford, and published a collection of travels under the title, *The Principal Navigations and Discoveries of the English Nation by Sea or Overland, to the Remote and Farthest Distant Quarters of the Earth, at any time within the compass of these* 1500 *years. Purchas his Pilgrims* was a continuation and enlargement of Hakluyt's work by Samuel Purchas, who died about 1628. *The World's Hydrographical Description*, published in 1595, was written by John Davis, the intrepid navigator, who made three voyages in search of the north-west passage, and discovered the straits that bear his name.

James Howell (1596–1666), in his *Familiar Letters*, gives a lively and amusing account of his travels in various continental countries.

In Scotland, JOHN KNOX, the celebrated reformer, wrote a *History of the Reformation of Religion within the Realm of Scotland;* SIR JAMES MELVIL, privy councillor to Mary Queen of Scots, left a record of the transactions in which he was engaged during the reigns of Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, and her successor; DAVID CALDERWOOD, a Presbyterian minister (1575–1651), and JOHN SPOTTISWOOD, Archbishop of Glasgow and St. Andrews (1565–1639), wrote severally *The History of the Church of Scotland*, the former from the Reformation to the year 1625, and the latter from 203 to that date; and the elegant Latin poet, the celebrated GEORGE BUCHANAN (1506–1582), tutor of James VI., composed *The History of Scotland* in that language.

### TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The present authorized version of the Scriptures was published in 1611. At a conference of the Established and Puritan clergy, held at Hampton Court in 1604, it was proposed that there should be a new translation; and the King accordingly appointed fifty-four learned men to engage in the undertaking, which occupied them about three years. The Bishops' Bible was adopted as the basis of the new version, but the previous ones were also resorted to, and the phraseology being but slightly modernized, it follows that the language of the present version belongs to a period anterior to that of its publication. It is regarded both as a model of genuine unadulterated English, and as the best translation of the Scriptures that has yet appeared.

# MODERN ENGLISH.

(Second Period—1660-1702.)

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

The Restoration period—Its licentiousness—The drama a political instrument—Growing power of literature—The French school—Dryden—Locke—Theological and Controversial writers—Hudibras—The Pilgrim's Progress—The New Philosophy

THE literature of this period reflects many of its social and political features. On the Restoration a carnival of open profanity succeeded the asceticism of the Commonwealth; the Court of Charles was the scene of orgies symbolized by those of Circe and Comus; and, not to mention the verses of such writers as Rochester, the comedies of the day, including those of Wycherly and Dryden, were pervaded by the prevailing spirit of licentiousness. But in this reign the stage was employed as a political engine no less than as a theatre of amusement. The war that raged in Parliament on the Exclusion Bill and other exciting topics was waged with equal fury by the dramatic writers, whose opportunities of inflaming the public mind were not overlooked by the contending parties; and accordingly we find Dryden, Otway, and Lee, on the part of the Court, with Settle and Shadwell on that of the Whigs, representing their political adversaries under the most odious aspect in their plays, or libelling and ridiculing them in prologue and epilogue. Viewing appeals of this nature in connection with the enormous aid contributed to his party by the satires of Dryden, it will at once be perceived that literature had now become a much greater power than it had been during the civil war, or at any previous stage of English history; and it is not less certain that this tendency was greatly promoted by the Revolution.

During this period our literature was materially affected by the influence of the French writers. Dryden unsuccessfully attempted to engraft upon the English Stage the Rhyming Tragedy, the form of which was adopted from our Gallic neighbours; but both in his non-dramatic poetry and in the fluency, elegance, and vivacity of his prose writings, he gave permanent effect to his predilection for French models. His critical essays and unprecedentedly popular poems moulded the taste and must have greatly augmented the number of both readers and writers; and as the leader of that movement by which the quaint, formal, and Latinized style of the Elizabethan era was replaced by a more idiomatic structure, uniting ease and variety of expression to melodious inflexion and balanced periods, he has been justly designated the Father of Modern English Prose. The influence of Locke's philosophy upon the mind of his countrymen, as well as upon that of Europe, should not pass unnoticed in any general view of the literature of this period; neither can we omit to notice the distinctive character it obtains from that eloquent and learned group of theological and controversial writers, comprising the names of Barrow, Cudworth, South, Tillotson, and Stillingfleet.

Butler's *Hudibras* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* also claim our attention here, as illustrative of the age in which they were penned. Of these two remarkable works, so opposite in spirit and aim; the one a royalist caricature of the Puritan, and the other a genuine and self-drawn picture of his inner life; the one possessing all the poignancy that can be imparted by wit and learning, and the other relying solely upon the resources of native untutored genius; it would be difficult to say which is the more admired in respect of literary merit.

The seed sown by Bacon in a previous generation now began to bear fruit. After the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1662, the "new philosophy" was universally cultivated, and during this period the annals of science were adorned by some of its greatest names, and enriched by some of its noblest discoveries; for this was the era of Newton, Halley, Flamsteed, and Boyle.

## CHAPTER II.

### AUTHORS AND WORKS.

I. Poets:—Waller—Denham—Dryden—Butler—Prior—Minor poets—Dramatic writers. II. Prose Writers:—Dryden—Barrow—Lord Clarendon—Bunyan—Locke—Bishop Burnet—Minor and miscellaneous works—Memoirs and antiquities.

### I.—POETS.

#### EDMUND WALLER—1605-1687.

Edmund Waller, born at Coleshill in Hertfordshire in 1605, was descended from a family of great antiquity. He was educated at Eton and Cambridge, and entered Parliament at an early age. The event known by the name of Waller's Plot belongs to the history of the period; and we shall only mention, that for his share in that transaction he was banished for life by Parliament, and fined £10,000. When Cromwell, to whom he was related, became all-powerful, he was permitted to return from exile; and in 1654 he wrote his famous panegyric on the Protector, which has always been regarded as the best of his productions. When Charles II. afterwards remarked to Waller that the congratulatory verses addressed to himself were inferior to the *Panegyric*, the witty courtier adroitly replied that poets succeeded in fiction better than in truth.

The smoothness of Waller's verse, if compared with that of his contemporaries and of the immediately preceding generation, will be found to be its prominent feature. The critics of his own time, forgetful of the melody of the older poets, spoke of him as if he had been the first who had introduced harmony and regularity into our numbers; but the praise to which Waller and Denham are justly entitled, as improvers of English versification, is their innovation upon the harshness of the metaphysical school. Carew had, indeed, shown the example; but he did not, like Waller, methodically and undeviatingly adhere to the purpose of allowing

no verse to pass out of his hands which should not be metrically perfect. Although not entirely free from pedantry, Waller is so far from imitating the obscurity of the school of conceit, that, for perspicuity and purity, he may be regarded as one of the precursors of the French school, which cultivated these qualities to perfection. His model of versification was Fairfax's *Translation of Tasso;* and in some of his amatory pieces the sentiment and turn of expression remind us of the Italian school, whose influence can more or less be traced in all that group of poets among whom we have placed Waller. His sacred poems, written when he was nearly an octogenarian, exhibit no symptoms of intellectual decay.

### GO, LOVELY ROSE.

Go, lovely rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her, that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee,
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

### OLD AGE AND DEATH.

The seas are quiet when the winds give o'er
So calm are we when passions are no more.
For then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things, too certain to be lost.

Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.
The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made:
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

### SIR JOHN DENHAM—1615-1688.

Denham shares with Waller the merit of restoring harmony to English versification, with added ease and perspicuity; but he surpasses Waller in vigour and pointedness of expression. *Cooper's Hill*, his principal poem, is partly descriptive and partly didactic. It was published in 1643. His panegyric on Cowley shows the estimation in which that poet was held in his own time.

### JOHN DRYDEN—1631-1700.

John Dryden, descended from an old family in Northamptonshire, was born in that county in 1631. He was admitted a King's Scholar at Westminster, under the tuition of the celebrated Dr. Busby, and afterwards studied at Cambridge. On leaving that university, he became clerk or secretary to his relative, Sir Gilbert Pickering, who had been advanced by Cromwell to the post of Lord Chamberlain of his Court; but though introduced to public life under such patronage, after having been trained up in puritanical tenets, it is certain that Dryden did little violence to his feelings, when, on the Restoration, he produced his *Astræa Redux*, a congratulatory poem on that event. The new regime was more congenial to his tastes, more favourable to the exercise of his talents; and having, accordingly, become a devoted adherent of the Court, and a strenuous defender of monarchical principles, he in 1688 succeeded Sir William Davenant as poet-laureate. In *Heroic Stanzas to the Memory of Cromwell*, he had paid a just tribute to the character of that illustrious man; and of this circumstance his literary and political opponents did not afterwards neglect to avail themselves; but it has been well observed, that, as he had

not indulged in injurious reflections upon the exiled family, neither did he ever recall that praise of the Protector, to which even Cromwell's enemies did not deny he was entitled. On the accession of James II., Dryden became a convert to the Roman Catholic faith; a change of creed for which he has, both in his own and in very recent times, been stigmatized as a mercenary and renegade; but a fair view of his frank and manly character, as well as of the whole of his career, justifies a more liberal verdict. The Revolution deprived him of the laureateship, which was bestowed upon Shadwell, a bard "o'er all the realms of nonsense absolute," whom he had already anointed with immortal ridicule as the hero of *Mac-Flecknoe*, and as Og in *Absalom and Achitophel*. The small patrimony to which Dryden fell heir not being sufficient for the support of his family, he was compelled to work laboriously in his declining years; and though we may be indebted to this circumstance for the *Fables* and the *Virgil*, there is nothing to mitigate the feeling of regret, that his necessities and the taste of the age also imposed upon him the uncongenial and unsuccessful drudgery of writing for the stage. His authority as the autocrat of literature and criticism was not affected by the loss of his position at Court; and, to the end of his life, it was a saying, that a pinch out of Dryden's snuff-box at Will's Coffee-house was equivalent to obtaining a degree in that academy of wit. He died in 1700, and was interred in Westminster Abbey.

Dryden's life was devoted to a series of literary experiments, founded upon a careful comparison of ancient and modern authors; and even without deciding upon his merits as a poet, his rank in the Pantheon of English Literature would be adequately determined as the founder of modern criticism and the modern classical style. Rejecting what was cumbrous and pedantic in our older prose writers, and felicitously infusing into his native idiom the gracefulness and the airiness of the French, his prose essays definitively establish an era in that department of composition. And although, in poetry, perfection had already been reached—although the lyric, the epic, and the drama, had respectively furnished the highest models—an era of social and political progress not the less

inevitably demanded a corresponding variety of literary development; and Dryden, the bent of whose genius conspired with his training to constitute him the lawgiver of a new school, conferred upon poetry the elasticity that characterized his prose, and materially enlarged its province by applying it to new subjects. If we view his poetry in respect of its flexibility and compass of structure, its combination of smoothness and energy, its animated music and the majestic sweep of its pauses, it will at once be seen that he has left a very legible impression upon English versification. In whatever sphere he moves; whether he wields the scourge of satire or thrusts with the sword of argument; whether he sparkles in epilogue or luxuriates in description; whether he declaims in tragedy or sings to "the golden lyre,"—his fervid imagination rushes forth in a strong, rapid, and various flow of harmony. In his Preface to the *Fables* he has told us that images and illustrations presented themselves to his mind so readily, and in such abundance, that his only difficulty lay in selecting that which was most appropriate.

*Absalom and Achitophel*, the noblest satire in the language, was written in support of the Court party during the stormy period of the Exclusion Bill. It is a portrait gallery of the most eminent public characters of the time; and many of its passages, exhibiting the play of Dryden's genius in one of its most powerful and propitious moods, are treasured with the richest of our poetical heirlooms. *Mac-Flecknoe*, devoted entirely to the castigation of Shadwell, is the prototype and model of Pope's *Dunciad*. *The Hind and the Panther*, written in defence of the measures adopted by James II. in favour of the Roman Catholic Church, was not unwarrantably regarded by Dryden as the ablest of his poems. Besides the whole of *Virgil*, he translated portions of *Juvenal*, *Ovid*, *Horace*, *Persius;* and the *Fables*, which consist of adaptations from Chaucer and Boccaccio, abound in the characteristic beauties of his style. The most important of his pieces not already mentioned are the *Religio Laici; Annus Mirabilis*, a poem commemorative of the Dutch war and the fire in London in 1666; and that most brilliant of lyrics, *Alexander's Feast*, written for St. Cecilia's Day.

Dryden began his dramatic career by endeavouring to engraft upon the English Stage what was termed the Rhyming or Heroic Tragedy; but he afterwards acknowledged the error of his theory, both in his critical essays, and by reverting in his later tragedies to the traditional form of blank verse. As a dramatist he did not succeed; but *All for Love*, and *Sebastian*, his best tragedies, contain passages that will always be admired. Of the first of these, he said that it was the only play he ever wrote for himself; the rest, twenty-seven in number of all kinds, were given to the public. The best of his rhyming tragedies are the *Conquest of Granada*, the *Indian Emperor*, and *Aurungzebe*. His dramatic style was ridiculed by the Duke of Buckingham in the farce of the *Rehearsal*, wherein Dryden is caricatured under the name of Bayes; but he treated this attack with contemptuous indifference. "Bayes," he said, "is a brat so like his own father, that he cannot be mistaken for any other body."

Dryden's prose writings were chiefly devoted to criticism, many valuable specimens of which are scattered throughout his various prefaces and dedications; but his most important efforts in that department are the *Essay on Satire*, and the admirable *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*,—the first specimen of systematic criticism that had yet appeared in our literature. It is stated by Swift that Dryden, in a conversation with him, regretted the success of his own instructions, as he had made the people too suddenly skilful to be easily satisfied.

### FROM "ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL."

[The title of this poem is explained by the state of political parties in 1681, the time of its publication, when the Duke of Monmouth (Absalom), the favourite son of Charles II., had, in opposition to the policy and authority of his royal parent, allied himself with the celebrated Earl of Shaftesbury (Achitophel), and the infamous Duke of Buckingham (Zimri), with the intention of excluding the Duke of York from the succession. Shaftesbury and Buckingham had both been members of the famous Cabal.]

ASHLEY, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

Of these the false Achitophel was first;
A name to all succeeding ages curst:
For close designs and crooked counsels fit,
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit:
Restless, unfixed in principles and place;
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:
A fiery soul, which working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er informed its tenement of clay:
A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high
He sought the storms; but for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to show his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide:
Else, why should he, with wealth and honours blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?

* * * * *

In friendship false, implacable in hate,
Resolved to ruin or to rule the State.
To compass this the triple bond[1] he broke,
The pillars of the public safety shook,
And fitted Israel[2] with a foreign yoke;
Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name:
So easy still it proves, in factious times,
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's will!
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own!
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abethdin[3]
With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean,
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress;
Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.

[1] The triple alliance between England, Sweden, and Holland. See Macaulay's admirable summary of the reign of Charles II.

[2] England. The *foreign yoke* is the influence of Louis XIV. in the English councils.

[3] *i.e.*, Vice-President of the Sanhedrim. Shaftesbury was Lord Chancellor.

Oh, had he been content to serve the crown
With virtue only proper to the gown;
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cockle, that oppressed the noble seed;
David for him his tuneful harp had strung.
* * * * *
But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand;
And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
Achitophel, grown weary to possess
A lawful fame, a lasting happiness,
Disdained the golden fruit to gather free,
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.

VILLIERS, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land:
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand;
A man so various, that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome;
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts, and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.
* * * * *
Blest madman, who could every hour employ
With something new to wish or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes,
And both, to show his judgment, in extremes;
So over-violent or over-civil,
That every man with him was god or devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert:
Beggared by fools whom still he found too late;
He had his jest, and they had his estate.
He laughed himself from court, then had relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief;
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
On Absalom and wise Achitophel.

## ALEXANDER'S FEAST:

### AN ODE FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son;
Aloft in awful state
The god-like hero sate
On his imperial throne:

His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound;
(So should desert in arms be crowned):
The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate, like a blooming Eastern bride,
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above—
Such is the power of mighty love!
A dragon's fiery form belied the god,
Sublime on radiant spheres he rode,
When he to fair Olympia pressed, . . . . .
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,
A present deity! they shout around:
A present deity! the vaulted roofs rebound:
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung—
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young:
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Flushed with a purple grace,
He shows his honest face;
Now give the hautboys breath: he comes! he comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure;
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise;
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And, while he Heaven and Earth defied,
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful muse,
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted, at his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed:
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.
With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole;
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree:
'Twas but a kindred sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
War, he sung, is toil and trouble;
Honour, but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying;
If the world be worth thy winning
Think, O think it worth enjoying!
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee!
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again ;
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark ! hark ! the horrid sound
Has raised up his head,
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed, he stares around.
Revenge ! revenge ! Timotheus cries,
See the Furies arise :
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes !
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand !
Those are Grecian ghosts that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain :
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew !
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods !
The princes applaud with a furious joy ;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy ;
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame ;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown ;
He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

## DETACHED PIECES FROM DRYDEN'S PLAYS.

Far hence, upon the Mountains of the Moon,
Is my abode; where heaven and nature smile,
And strew with flowers the secret bed of Nile.
Blessed souls are there refined, and made more bright;
And, in the shades of heaven, prepared for light.

Mark but how terribly his eyes appear!
And yet there's something roughly noble there,
Which, in unfashioned nature, looks divine;
And like a gem does in the quarry shine.

When empire in its childhood first appears,
A watchful fate o'ersees its tender years;
Till grown more strong, it thrusts and stretches out,
And elbows all the kingdoms round about:
The place thus made for its first breathing free,
It moves again for ease and luxury:
Till, swelling by degrees, it has possest
The greater space, and now crowds up the rest.
When, from behind there starts some petty state,
And pushes on its now unwieldy fate:
Then, down the precipice of time it goes,
And sinks in minutes, which in ages rose.

Love various minds does variously inspire:
He stirs, in gentle natures, gentle fire,
Like that of incense on the altars laid:
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade,
A fire which every windy passion blows;
With pride it mounts, and with revenge it glows.

I watched the early glories of her eyes,
As men for daybreak watch the eastern skies.

Then, setting free a sigh, from her fair eyes
She wiped two pearls, the remnant of wild showers,
Which hung like drops upon the bells of flowers.

Perfection is discovered in a moment:
He that ne'er saw the sun before, yet knows him.

What precious drops are those
Which silently each other's track pursue,
Bright as young diamonds in their infant dew?

I am as free as Nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.

### SAMUEL BUTLER—1612-1680.

Samuel Butler, the son of a small farmer in Worcestershire, was born in that county, and educated at the Free School of Worcester. Having entered the service of the Duchess of Kent, of whom the learned Selden was steward, he had thus an opportunity of enjoying the society of that man, who often employed him in literary business. Sir Samuel Luke, a puritan knight of Bedfordshire, in whose household he afterwards held some office, is supposed to be the original of "Hudibras." On the Restoration, the Earl of Carbury made him steward of Ludlow Castle; and about this time he married a lady who brought him a fortune; but which was lost in bad securities. He was the companion of Buckingham and other titled celebrities of the time; but notwithstanding the enormous popularity of his celebrated poem, he obtained little more than barren praise for his reward; and he is said to have died in great poverty in 1680.

"Hudibras" is a burlesque or mock-heroic poem, directed against the puritanical party. It is unrivalled for brilliance of wit and power of satire, for vast erudition, shrewdness of observation, and vigorous brevity of expression; but it makes so exorbitant a demand upon the attention and intelligence of the reader, that there is sometimes a temptation to complain of the fertility of the mine, even while admiring the richness of the ore. For the purposes of rhetoric, it is an armoury replenished with the most formidable of weapons, and its barbed and pointed phrases are thickly woven into the language. The following extract will show that the renowned knight of La Mancha is the prototype of the hero:—

#### SIR HUDIBRAS.

When civil dudgeon first grew high,
And men fell out, they knew not why:
When hard words, jealousies, and fears,
Set folks together by the ears;
* * * * *
When gospel-trumpeter, surrounded
With long-eared rout, to battle sounded;

And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick:
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode a-colonelling.
A wight he was whose very sight would
Entitle him mirror of knighthood;
That never bowed his stubborn knee
To anything but chivalry;
Nor put up blow but that which laid
Right-worshipful on shoulder-blade:
Chief of domestic knights and errant,
Either for cartel or for warrant;
Great on the bench, great on the saddle,
That could as well bind o'er as swaddle:
Mighty he was at both of these,
And styled of war as well as peace.
(So some rats, of amphibious nature,
Are either for the land or water.)
But here our authors make a doubt
Whether he were more wise or stout;
Some hold the one, and some the other:
But howsoe'er they make a pother,
The diff'rence was so small, his brain
Outweighed his rage but half a grain;
Which made some take him for a tool
That knaves do work with, called a fool.
For't has been held by many, that
As Montaigne, playing with his cat,
Complains she thought him but an ass,
Much more she would Sir Hudibras.
(For that's the name our valiant knight
To all his challenges did write).
But they're mistaken very much:
'Tis plain enough he was no such:
We grant, although he had much wit,
He was very shy of using it,
As being loath to wear it out,
And therefore bore it not about,
Unless on holidays or so,
As men their best apparel do.
Besides, 'tis known he could speak Greek
As naturally as pigs squeak;
That Latin was no more difficile
Than to a blackbird 'tis to whistle:
Being rich in both, he never scanted
His bounty unto such as wanted,

But much of either would afford
To many that had not one word.

* * * *

He was in logic a great critic,
Profoundly skilled in analytic.
He could distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and south-west side;
On either which he could dispute,
Confute, change hands, and still confute.
He'd undertake to prove, by force
Of argument—a man's no horse;
He'd prove a buzzard—is no fowl,
And that a lord may be—an owl;
A calf—an alderman; a goose—a justice;
And rooks—committee-men and trustees.
He'd run in debt by disputation,
And pay with ratiocination.
All this by syllogism, true
In mood and figure, he would do.
For rhetoric, he could not ope
His mouth, but out there flew a trope.
And when he happened to break off
I' the middle of his speech, or cough,
He had hard words ready to show why,
And tell what rules he did it by;
Else, when with greatest art he spoke,
You'd think he talked like other folk;
For all a rhetorician's rules
Teach nothing but to name his tools.

### MATTHEW PRIOR—1664-1721.

The place of this poet's birth, who is said to have been the son of a joiner, is not ascertained; but if, as has been conjectured, it was Wimborne in Dorsetshire, and not London, he was, when a boy, living under the protection of his uncle, who kept a tavern at Charing Cross, and to whose care he was indebted for his education at Westminster School under Dr. Busby. The manner in which Prior was enabled to prosecute his studies at a university reminds us of the early career of Ben Jonson. Being recalled from the seminary just named for the purpose of assisting his uncle in the business of a vintner, he was discovered in that capacity by the Earl of Dorset, who, perceiving his genius,

sent him to Cambridge at his own expense, where he successively obtained a degree and a fellowship. There also he formed an acquaintance with Charles Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax; and in 1687 appeared their joint production, *The Country Mouse and City Mouse*, a satirical poem on Dryden's *Hind and Panther*. The substantial rewards bestowed upon these young aspirants contrast strikingly with the neglect and ingratitude experienced by Dryden during the period of the Restoration, in return for a lifetime of exacting and important services; and there can be no doubt his young opponents were among the first who reaped the beneficial influences of the new era in literature, which he had been so instrumental in inaugurating. The immense popularity of Dryden's powerful satires and political poems had strongly stimulated the literary mind of the country. Not addressed, as poems had hitherto been, to those who were more or less exclusively of the literary or scholarly class, they were eagerly perused by every county gentleman whose reading had been chiefly limited to such publications as the *Gazette* or the *Observator*. It is one of the features of the Revolution period, that instead of literary talent being starved with empty honours, it now began to be recognised as a power that it was proper to reward, as well as politic to propitiate. It is stated that, in allusion to the poem just named, Prior's noble patron introduced him at Court with the pleasantry of begging permission to present a *Mouse* to his Majesty. William, who seems to have thought highly of the piece, quickly replied, "I will make a man of him." Prior was accordingly in 1691 sent to the Hague as secretary to the English plenipotentiaries; filled the same post to the embassy on the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697; and in the subsequent year accompanied the embassy to the Court of France in the same capacity. His reputation for talent in public affairs seems to have equalled his distinction as a poet. He became an active politician, entered Parliament in 1701, and about this time deserted his standard and joined the Tories, who in 1711 sent him to Paris on a mission of no less importance than to initiate those negotiations that resulted in the Treaty of Utrecht. When his political opponents in 1714 entered upon their long lease of power, Prior,

for his share in the transaction just mentioned, was committed to the Tower on a charge of treason, where he was confined two years, during which he wrote his poem of *Alma*. At this time he also published a collected edition of his works, by which he realized £4000, which, added to a donation of the same amount by the Earl of Oxford, enabled him to purchase a handsome estate. He died shortly afterwards, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The lighter and more characteristic pieces of Prior are pervaded by the same spirit of gay gallantry as those of the Court Poets of Charles II.; but his style is more fluent and polished, his epigram more concise and pointed, and he derives more of his fictions and illustrations from ancient mythology. His larger pieces are, *Alma; Henry and Emma*, a paraphrase of the anonymous old ballad, *The Nut Brown Maid;* and *Solomon*, a moral poem, upon which he bestowed the greatest pains, and which he naturally deemed the best of his productions. Amongst his miscellaneous pieces are odes in praise of his royal patrons, William and Anne, and occasional verses in celebration of Marlborough's victories.

The poem of *Alma* is a philosophical discussion, professedly written in imitation of *Hudibras*. It is chiefly remarkable for the liveliness of its style, of which the following extract will afford a specimen:—

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND CANTO.

But shall we take the muse abroad,
To drop her idly on the road?
And leave our subject in the middle,
As Butler did his bear and fiddle?
Yet he, consummate master, knew
When to recede, and where pursue;
His noble negligences teach
What others' toils despair to reach.
He, perfect dancer, climbs the rope,
And balances your fear and hope:
If, after some distinguished leap,
He drops his pole and seems to slip,
Straight gath'ring all his active strength,
He rises higher half his length;

With wonder you approve his flight,
And owe your pleasure to your fright.
But, like poor Andrew, I advance,
False mimic of my master's dance:
Around the cord a while I sprawl,
And thence, though low, in earnest fall.

### MARVEL—ROSCOMMON—SEDLEY—ROCHESTER—DORSET.

Andrew Marvel (1620–1678) the spirited and independent Member of Parliament for Hull, holds an honourable rank among the minor poets of this era. Besides his deservedly admired song of the *Emigrants in the Bermudas*, his noble ode on Cromwell's return from Ireland, his humorous satire on Holland, and his verses on Milton's blindness, are worthy of particular mention. The Earl of Roscommon (1633–1684) the author of a poetical *Essay on Translated Verse*, which was much esteemed in his own time, is now best remembered as the subject of Pope's eulogy in his imitations of Horace:—

"In all Charles's days,
Roscommon only boasts unspotted bays."

The censure implied in these lines is shared, though in an unequal degree, by Sir Charles Sedley and the Earl of Rochester, the witty poets of the Court of the Second Charles. The Earl of Dorset, a distinguished patron of literary talent, was the author of the well-known song, *To all you Ladies now on Land*, written, or alleged to have been written, at sea on the eve of an engagement with the Dutch in 1665.

### DRAMATIC WRITERS.

The Restoration period displays considerable variety of dramatic composition. The heroic or rhyming tragedy, which in its most typical form was almost monopolized by Dryden, did not long survive the ridicule that was thrown upon it by *The Rehearsal*, a result probably less attributable to the power of the satire than to the artificial and extravagant character of its object. A more natural style succeeded. Otway is a classic, and the plays of

Southerne will always entitle him to a niche in the history of the drama. Congreve's tragedy of *The Mourning Bride* is known chiefly on account of the descriptive passage that Johnson's eulogy has rendered celebrated. The character of Dryden's dramatic works has been already noticed in the sketch of that writer.

Thomas Otway was born at Trotting in Sussex, in 1651, and was educated at Winchester School and Oxford University. His principal works are the tragedies of *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserved;* both of which rank high in the drama, and the latter still retains possession of the stage. Otway was a master of pathos. "More tears have been shed, probably, for the sorrows of Monimia and Belvidera[1] than for those of Desdemona." Like too many of his brother poets, it was his misfortune to live at a time when the possession of the most brilliant genius was no security against poverty; and, according to one account, his death was occasioned by the voracity with which he attempted to swallow a morsel of bread in order to relieve the pangs of hunger. Nathaniel Lee was the author of several tragedies; one of the best of which, *Alexander the Great*, was warmly commended by Dryden. His plays are pervaded by the characteristics of the rhyming school; but they also abound in passages of great power and beauty. He was subject to fits of insanity, and died in 1692, at the age of thirty-four. *Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage*, the principal tragedy of Thomas Southerne (1659–1746) is still read with pleasure. His merit consists in pathos and pleasing versification.

This period comprises a group of comic dramatists, embracing the names of Wycherley, Congreve, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh, that have never since been equalled. These writers, the founders of the genuine English Comedy, are characterized by the same excellences and the same faults—ease, gaiety, exuberant wit, and forcible painting, combined with gross indelicacy. Materially contributing to illustrate the social features of the time, the worst of which are embodied in the plays of Wycherley and Congreve, the comedy of this period possesses for the historian a value independent of its literary merits. The severe and powerful animad-

[1] The heroines of *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserved*.

versions of Jeremy Collier, a nonjuring clergyman, upon the immorality of the stage, seconded by the efforts of the British Essayists, at length exercised a most salutary influence both upon the public mind and upon the moral tone of dramatic writers.

## II.—PROSE WRITERS.

### JOHN DRYDEN.

The prose writings of Dryden consist chiefly of prefaces to his poems, dedications, and critical essays. His rank as a prose writer has already been indicated. The following extract is from his celebrated *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*:—

#### BEN JONSON.

As for Jonson, to whose character I am now arrived, if we look upon him while he was himself (for his last plays were but his dotages), I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre ever had. He was a most severe judge of himself, as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his works you find little to retrench or alter. Wit, and language, and humour also in some measure, we had before him; but something of art was wanting to the drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who preceded him. You seldom find him making love in any of his scenes, or endeavouring to move the passions: his genius was too sullen and saturnine to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such a height. Humour was his proper sphere; and in that he delighted most to represent mechanic people. He was deeply conversant in the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them; there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors of those times whom he has not translated in *Sejanus* and *Catiline*. But he has done his robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch; and what would be theft in other poets is only victory in him. With the spoils of these writers he so represented Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that if one of their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his language, 'twas that he weaved it too closely and laboriously, in his comedies especially; perhaps, too, he did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latin as he found them; wherein, though he learnedly followed their language, he did not enough comply with the idiom of ours. If I would compare him with Shakspeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shakspeare the greater wit. Shakspeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets; Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing: I admire him, but I love Shakspeare.

## DR. ISAAC BARROW—1630-1677.

Dr. Barrow was one of the most distinguished men of his time. He was Professor of Mathematics in Cambridge, and was succeeded by Sir Isaac Newton, having resigned the appointment in order to devote himself more exclusively to clerical pursuits. He had previously filled the Greek chair in the same university. As a controversialist, he was one of the most decided opponents of the Romish Church; and his sermons are distinguished both for copious eloquence and pregnant brevity. His erudition was extensive; and his reputation as a mathematician has by some been placed next to that of Newton himself. His character was morally excellent; and he always showed a noble disregard for personal gain or preferment. He was one of the royal chaplains and master of Trinity College.

### WIT.

First, it may be demanded what the thing is we speak of, or what this facetiousness doth import? To which question I might reply as Democritus did to him that asked the definition of a man: "'Tis that which we all see and know." Any one better apprehends what it is by acquaintance than I can inform him by description. It is indeed a thing so versatile and multiform, appearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notion thereof than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of the fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale; sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound; sometimes it is wrapped in a dress of humorous expression; sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude; sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection; sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense; sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture, passeth for it; sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness, giveth it being; sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange; sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose; often it consists in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable and inexplicable, being answerable to the numberless rovings of fancy and windings of language. It is, in short, a manner of speaking out of the simple and plain way—such as reason teacheth and proveth things by—which, by a pretty surprising uncouthness in con-

ceit or expression, doth affect and amuse the fancy, stirring in it some wonder, and breeding some delight thereto. It raiseth admiration, as signifying a nimble sagacity of apprehension, a special felicity of invention, a vivacity of spirit and reach of wit more than vulgar. It seemeth to argue a rare quickness of parts, that one can fetch in remote conceits applicable; a notable skill, that he can dexterously accommodate them to the purpose before him; together with a lively briskness of humour, not apt to damp those sportful flashes of imagination. Whence, in Aristotle, such persons are termed *epidexioi*, dexterous men; and *eutropoi*, men of facile or versatile manners, who can easily turn themselves to all things, or turn all things to themselves. It also procureth delight, by gratifying curiosity with its rareness or semblance of difficulty; as monsters, not for their beauty, but their rarity; as juggling tricks, not for their use, but their abstruseness, are beheld with pleasure, by diverting the mind from its road of serious thoughts; by instilling gaiety and airiness of spirit; by provoking to such dispositions of spirit in way of emulation or complaisance; and by seasoning matters, otherwise distasteful or insipid, with an unusual and thence grateful tang.

## LORD CLARENDON—1608-1674.

Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, was the son of Henry Hyde of Dinton in Wiltshire. He was educated at Oxford, studied law at the Middle Temple, and commenced his political career in the fourth Parliament summoned by Charles I., in 1640. As a member of the Long Parliament, he at first attached himself to the liberal section of the House, but latterly, disapproving of the tendencies of that party, he became the devoted partisan of royalty, and the confidential counsellor and agent of Charles, who appointed him Chancellor of the Exchequer. His career, in fact, forms a conspicuous part of the history of the civil war. He was the writer of the state papers on the royal side; and they are said to be much superior in tone and style to those of the Parliament. He accompanied Prince Charles to the Continent, where he was his chief adviser during their exile, and suffered many privations, including even the misery of pecuniary destitution. On the Restoration he enjoyed the well-merited reward of his loyalty, probity, and talents; and during his tenure of the office of Lord Chancellor he was the all-powerful minister of Charles II. But the people having ere long discovered that the Restoration was not the millennium after all, it was necessary to immolate a victim to their disappointed expectations; and if they did not, like certain Fetich worshippers

in similar circumstances, wreak their spite upon the object of their idolatry, it was because they found infinite satisfaction in laying all their misfortunes to the charge of the high priest of royalty. Charles I. had sacrificed Strafford to his fears, and his son sacrificed Clarendon to his convenience. He loved business, and his Majesty loved pleasure. The Chancellor was, moreover, a man of correct morals and decorous in his conversation—peculiarities that were turned to good account by his enemies. Buckingham, with a cushion dangling by his side, to represent the bag and seals, and an attendant marching before him with the bellows as the official insignia, was in the habit of mimicking the gait of the Chancellor, to the unbounded merriment of his royal companion. The intrigues of the courtiers conspiring with the popular fury and the facility with which Charles forgot past services, Clarendon was in 1667 compelled to flee, and died an exile at Rouen, after having pitifully, but in vain, asked the King permission to return to die in his native country.

Ann Hyde, Clarendon's daughter, was married to the Duke of York, afterward James II., and was the mother of Queen Mary, William's consort, and her successor Queen Anne.

Clarendon's literary fame depends upon his account of the civil war, which he entitles the *History of the Rebellion.* It is not distinguished by excellence of style, but as the narrative of one of the prominent actors in the mighty contest—of a man possessing the abilities of the statesman, and gifted with no ordinary power of discriminating character—it forms a valuable acquisition to our historical literature. His personal sketches are highly interesting, and are written with great talent; but both in these and in the colouring of events, the strong partisan is displayed without any affectation of impartiality.

### HAMPDEN.

FROM THE "HISTORY OF THE REBELLION."

He was of that rare affability and temper in debate, and of that seeming humility and submission of judgment, as if he brought no opinion with him, but a desire of information and instruction; yet he had so subtle a way of interrogating, and, under the notion of doubts, insinuating his objections, that he left his

opinions with those from whom he pretended to learn and receive them. And even with them who were able to preserve themselves from his infusions, and discerned those opinions to be fixed in him with which they could not comply, he always left the character of an ingenious[1] and conscientious person. He was indeed a very wise man, and of great parts, and possessed with the most absolute spirit of popularity, that is, the most absolute faculties to govern the people, of any man I ever knew. For the first year of the Parliament he seemed rather to moderate and soften the violent and distempered humours than to inflame them. But wise and dispassioned men plainly discerned that that moderation proceeded from prudence and observation that the season was not ripe, rather than that he approved of the moderation; and that he begat many opinions and notions, the education whereof he committed to other men; so far disguising his own designs that he seemed seldom to wish more than was concluded: and in many gross conclusions, which would hereafter contribute to designs not yet set on foot, when he found them sufficiently backed by majority of voices, he would withdraw himself before the question, that he might seem not to consent to so much visible unreasonableness; which produced as great a doubt in some as it did approbation in others of his integrity.

## JOHN BUNYAN—1628–1688.

The historian of European literature says, that the author of *The Pilgrim's Progress* may pass for the father of our English novelists; a title which we may be assured he neither anticipated nor aspired to. This classification has reference, of course, solely to the literary character of that celebrated book, to the plan of the narrative, and its power of fascinating the attention of the reader, even although he were ignorant or careless of its symbolical signification. The product of religious enthusiasm acting upon a fervid and poetical imagination, it is perhaps the most popular work in our language; and having for a century and a half been the delight of the unlearned, it is now equally admired by scholar and critic. Another of Bunyan's works, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, is scarcely less known; and the personal feelings and experiences of the author enter largely into the composition of both. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a model of Saxon purity and simplicity of style.

The superiority of genius over the accidents of fortune is strikingly exemplified by the history of Bunyan, who was born in the

[1] *i.e.*, ingenuous.

poorest condition of life, being the son of a tinker, and having himself followed that humble occupation by travelling through the country. According to his own account, he led a very wicked life before he became a converted man; but it is believed that his statements on that point are undesignedly exaggerated. Having zealously devoted himself to the preaching of the gospel, he was made a victim of the intolerant spirit of the Restoration, and was imprisoned in Bedford Jail for twelve years; where his time was divided between making tagged laces for the support of his family, and composing some of those works that have rendered his memory imperishable.

### JOHN LOCKE—1632-1704.

This eminent philosopher, "the Newton of Metaphysics," was born at Wrington near Bristol, and received his education at Westminster School and the University of Oxford. The prominent circumstances of his career are, his connection with the celebrated Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury,[1] whom he followed into exile on his flight to Holland in 1682; his concealment there when the English Government demanded his extradition by the Dutch; and his return to England in 1688. He was shortly afterwards appointed to the situation of Commissioner of Appeals, with a salary of £200 a year. As tutor in the family of Shaftesbury, he superintended the education of his grandson, the author of the *Characteristics;* and in that position he enjoyed familiar intercourse with Halifax and other men distinguished by position and genius. For some years before his death he resided with Sir Francis Masham, at his mansion-house in Essex.

Like Bacon, Locke displayed at Oxford an insuperable aversion to the scholastic philosophy; and as Bacon had explained the true principles of physical science to be founded upon observation and experience, Locke resolved to apply the same method to the investigation of mental phenomena. This is accordingly the theory of his great work, the *Essay concerning the Human Understanding*, published in 1690. As the first popular treatise on

[1] Achitophel. See pages 223, 224.

mental philosophy, it met with a success corresponding to its design, not only in England, but throughout Europe, having speedily been translated into the French and Latin languages; and in this country, at least, it will always be one of the text-books that must be included in a liberal education. Locke was a steady and enlightened advocate of the principles of civil and religious freedom. Of his other works, his *Letters on Toleration*, *Conduct of the Understanding*, and *Thoughts concerning Education*, are the most deserving of mention.

### KNOWLEDGE ACTUAL OR HABITUAL.

There are several ways wherein the mind is possessed of truth, each of which is called Knowledge.

First, There is actual knowledge, which is the present view the mind has of the agreement or disagreement of any of its ideas, or of the relation they have one to another.

Secondly, A man is said to know any proposition, which having been once laid before his thoughts, he evidently perceived the agreement or disagreement of the ideas whereof it consists; and so lodged it in his memory, that whenever that proposition comes again to be reflected on, he, without doubt or hesitation, embraces the right side, assents to, and is certain of, the truth of it. This, I think, one may call habitual knowledge; and thus a man may be said to know all those truths which are lodged in his memory by a foregoing clear and full perception, whereof the mind is assured past doubt, as often as it has occasion to reflect on them. For our finite understandings being able to think clearly and distinctly but on one thing at once, if men had no knowledge of any more than what they actually thought on, they would all be very ignorant; and he that knew most would know but one truth, that being all he was able to think on at one time.

Of habitual knowledge, there are also, vulgarly speaking, two degrees.

First, The one is of such truths laid up in the memory, as whenever they occur to the mind, it actually perceives the relation there is between those ideas. And this is in all those truths whereof we have an intuitive knowledge, where the ideas themselves, by an immediate view, discover their agreement or disagreement one with another.

Secondly, The other is of such truths, whereof the mind having been convinced, it retains the memory of the conviction, without the proofs. Thus a man that remembers certainly that he once perceived the demonstration, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, is certain that he knows it, because he cannot doubt the truth of it. In his adherence to a truth, where the demonstration by which it was at first known is forgot, though a man may be thought rather to believe his memory than really to know—and this way of entertaining a truth seemed formerly to me like something between opinion and knowledge, a sort of assurance which exceeds bare belief, for that relies on the

testimony of another—yet, upon a due examination, I find it comes not short of perfect certainty, and is in effect true knowledge. That which is apt to mislead our first thoughts into a mistake in this matter is, that the agreement or disagreement of the ideas in this case is not perceived, as it was at first, by an actual view of all the intermediate ideas whereby the agreement or disagreement of those in the proposition was at first perceived, but by other intermediate ideas that show the agreement or disagreement of the ideas contained in the proposition whose certainty we remember. For example, in this proposition, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, one who has seen and clearly perceived the demonstration of this truth, knows it to be true, when that demonstration is gone out of his mind, so that at present it is not actually in view, and possibly cannot be recollected; but he knows it in a different way from what he did before. The agreement of the two ideas joined in that proposition is perceived; but it is by the intervention of other ideas than those which at first produced that perception. He remembers—*i.e.*, he knows (for remembrance is but the reviving of some past knowledge)—that he was once certain of the truth of this proposition, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones.

The immutability of the same relations between the same immutable things is now the idea that shows him, that if the three angles of a triangle were once equal to two right ones, they will always be equal to two right ones. And hence he comes to be certain, that what was once true in the case is always true; what ideas once agreed will always agree; and consequently, what he once knew to be true, he will always know to be true, as long as he can remember that he once knew it. Upon this ground it is that particular demonstrations in mathematics afford general knowledge. If, then, the perception that the same ideas will eternally have the same habitudes and relations, be not a sufficient ground of knowledge, there could be no knowledge of general propositions in mathematics; for no mathematical demonstration would be any other than particular, and when a man had demonstrated any proposition concerning one triangle or circle, his knowledge would not reach beyond that particular diagram. If he would extend it further, he must renew his demonstration in another instance, before he could know it to be true in another like triangle, and so on; by which means, one could never come to the knowledge of any general propositions. Nobody, I think, can deny that Mr. Newton certainly knows any proposition, that he now at any time reads in his book, to be true, though he has not in actual view that admirable chain of intermediate ideas whereby he at first discovered it to be true. Such a memory as that, able to retain such a train of particulars, may be well thought beyond the reach of human faculties, when the very discovery, perception, and laying together that wonderful connection of ideas, is found to surpass most readers' comprehension. But yet it is evident the author himself knows the proposition to be true, remembering he once saw the connection of those ideas, as certainly as he knows such a man wounded another, remembering that he saw him run him through. But because the memory is not always so clear as actual perception, and does in all men more or less decay in length of time, this, amongst other differences, is one which shows that demonstrative knowledge is much more imperfect than intuitive.

### GILBERT BURNET—1643-1715.

Gilbert Burnet was born at Edinburgh, was educated for the Church, and after having been for some time Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, removed to London in 1674, where he soon attracted notice by his writings.

In 1679 he was voted the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for his publication of his *History of the Reformation*—an honour which he owed to the excited state of the public mind upon the Popish Plot; and some time afterwards he wrote a letter to Charles, animadverting with great severity on his public and private character. On the accession of James II. he considered it prudent to retire to Holland, where his share in promoting the Revolution is matter of history. On the consummation of that event he was made Bishop of Salisbury, and continued to take an active part in public affairs till his death.

Burnet's *History of the Reformation* and *History of My Own Times* are his principal works. They are both valuable narratives; the latter, like Clarendon's History, being embellished by vigorous and discriminating portraits. The *History of the Reformation* is said to be the first historical work in English that is supported by a large appendix of documents.

### MINOR AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITERS.

As an improver of English prose, Sir William Temple (1628–1698) has by many been ranked next to Dryden. His works are principally short miscellaneous pieces, including an *Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning.* John Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury (1630–1694), was the most popular preacher of his time, and for half a century his sermons were more read than those of any other English divine. Their deficiency in the graces of eloquence is redeemed by earnestness and benevolence of feeling.

We must be content to notice briefly several eminent theological and controversial writers of this period.

Dr. Ralph Cudworth (1617–1688) was Regius Professor of

Hebrew at the University of Cambridge. He is celebrated as the author of *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, published in 1678, a metaphysical treatise directed against the material philosophy of Hobbes, and having for its object the refutation of atheism and the doctrine of fatalism. This work was never completed, the first part only having been given to the public. The sermons of Dr. Robert South (1633–1716), Prebendary of Westminster, were the delight of the courtiers of the Restoration, on account of their wittiness, their unsparing sarcasm upon the sectarians, and their uncompromising championship of the doctrines of divine right and passive obedience.

Edward Stillingfleet (1635–1699), Bishop of Worcester, holds a conspicuous position for argumentative power, and depth of ecclesiastical learning. He was constantly engaged in defending Protestantism against the Romanists, or Episcopacy against the Nonconformists. Dr. William Sherlock (1641–1707), Dean of St. Paul's, and one of our standard divines, was the author of *A Practical Discourse concerning Death*, besides several important works on the Evidences of Christianity. A greater authority is Dr. John Pearson (1613–1686), Bishop of Chester, author of *An Exposition of the Apostles' Creed*, a work equally admired for closeness of reasoning and beauty of composition. Dr. Thomas Burnet (1635–1715), Master of the Charter House, London, was the author of *The Sacred Theory of the Earth;* a work of no value as a contribution to philosophy, but highly deserving notice for splendour of style. Dr. Henry More (1614–1687) was a learned and eloquent expounder of the Platonic philosophy. John Howe, John Owen, John Flavel, and Matthew Henry, author of the Commentary on the Bible, are well-known champions of nonconformist opinions.

## MEMOIRS AND ANTIQUITIES.

Lucy Hutchinson, born 1620, the daughter of Sir Allen Apsley, Lieutenant of the Tower, and wife of Colonel Hutchinson of the parliamentary army, contributed to the contemporary

annals of the civil war a memoir of her husband's life, containing many lively sketches.

John Evelyn (1620–1706) is best known by his *Diary*, which embraces nearly the whole of his long life, and contains much interesting and valuable information upon the social character and political events of his time. He was one of the most zealous members of the Royal Society, and laboured assiduously in the promotion of science. Samuel Pepys (1632–1703) was Secretary of the Admiralty in the reigns of Charles II. and James II. Like Evelyn, he kept a *Diary*, which contains an interesting narrative of public events, and is especially valuable on account of the information to which his official position enabled him to obtain access. This curious work lay unpublished for a century and a half. The *Athenæ Oxonienses*, published in 1691, a work constantly referred to in biographical notices, was the joint production of Anthony Wood and John Aubrey.

Sir William Dugdale's *Baronage of England*, and *Monasticon Anglicanum*, and the *Fœdera* of Thomas Rymer, the royal historiographer, are the most valuable contributions to the antiquarian literature of this period.

# MODERN ENGLISH.

(Third Period—1702–1750.)

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

The Augustan Era—Pope's poetry—Addison and Steele—Defoe and Swift—The English Novel.

THE reigns of Anne and her two successors have frequently been designated the Augustan Era of English literature. During the period now under review, the classic form into which our language and poetry had been moulded by Dryden, or at least to which he had mainly contributed, was brought to perfection by the genius of Pope; and when it is admitted that the writings of the latter are more frequently quoted than those of any other poet except Shakspeare, it is easy to see why they should have given the tone to our poetical literature for half a century. A new character was at the same time imparted to English prose by Addison and Steele. By the publication of the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*, it was the aim of these writers to elevate the morality, ameliorate the manners, and cultivate the literary taste of their countrymen; and for this purpose they sought to combine instruction with amusement, enforcing their arguments by the union of wit and learning, enlivening their pages by sallies of playful humour upon minor follies, and enjoining the more important moral obligations in a style of familiar eloquence and a spirit of unaffected and earnest humanity. These celebrated periodicals, being partly devoted to the discussion of costume, amusements, and other

topics of the day, will never cease to be interesting as a picture of the manners and peculiarities of the time. Of greater literary fame are the writings of Defoe and Swift, both distinguished for the Saxon simplicity of their style, and the air of reality with which they invest their fascinating narratives; but the fierce and contemptuous satire of the latter stands in marked contrast to the good-humoured raillery of the British Essayists. Conspicuous in this period are the names of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, the founders of the true English novel, the novel of society, in which are depicted the characters and events of real life, and by which the vapid and interminable romances of the French school were at once superseded. In France itself an entirely new vein of fiction had been opened by Scarron and Le Sage, the design and manner of which are strongly reflected in the works of Fielding and Smollett.

## CHAPTER II.

### AUTHORS AND WORKS.

I. Poets:—Pope—Young—Thomson—Collins—Gray—Mark Akenside and others—The Drama. II. Prose Writers:—Steele—Addison—Defoe—Swift. Novelists:—Richardson—Fielding—Smollett—Minor and miscellaneous writers.

### I.—POETS.

#### ALEXANDER POPE—1688-1744.

Alexander Pope was born in London, and his father, after having made a fortune as a linen draper in that city, retired to reside at Binfield in Windsor Forest. There were composed many of those juvenile pieces of our poet which display a maturity of thought and a precocious knowledge of the world that cannot be regarded without admiration, and amongst which the *Ode to Silence*, in imitation of Rochester, may be mentioned as the most remarkable. His facility in verse-making has become proverbial in his own words, that he "lisped in numbers;" and he used to say that he did not remember the time when he began to make verses. His father, being a Roman Catholic, first put him under the care of the family priest, who was named Bannister, and who taught him the Greek and Latin rudiments. He was next sent to school, first at Twyford and then at London; and at Binfield, when about twelve, he had again the assistance of a priest. He had now attained proficiency in the classics, and, at the early age just mentioned, resolved upon a plan of study for himself, which he carried out without any help, excepting that he got instructions in French and Italian. Before he was thirteen he prevailed upon some of his friends to conduct him to Will's Coffee-house, and was there gratified with a sight of the poet whose genius had kindled his youthful zeal, and with whose fame his own was destined to be so intimately associated, and the character of whose poetry he has so well described in three of his happiest lines. He adopted Dryden as his poetical model, and a comparison of the master

with the disciple will show how much the one resembles the other both in sentiment and turn of expression.

At an early period of his life Pope had formed an intimacy with Addison, which subsisted for some years with mutual gratification and esteem. The rupture that terminated their friendship has been keenly discussed, Pope reaping a plentiful harvest of abuse on the one hand, while on the other it is not so clear that Addison can be acquitted of the charge preferred by Pope, who accused him of double dealing with reference to his translation of the *Iliad*, and was also under the impression that he had hired a writer to libel him. In a letter from Pope to a common friend, we find the germs of his famous satire upon Addison under the character of Atticus: "We have, it seems, a great Turk in poetry, who can never bear a brother on the throne; and he has his mutes, too, a set of nodders, winkers, and whisperers, whose business is to strangle all other offsprings of wit in their birth." It should not be forgotten, by those who see nothing in the character of Pope except inexorable vindictiveness, that, after the death of Addison, he pays a spontaneous and eloquent tribute to his genius and the purity and elevating tendency of his writings.

The eminent social position occupied by Pope is one of the most striking examples of the power of genius that literary history can afford. Unlike Prior, he was so far from obtaining political preferment, that he was subjected to civil disabilities as the member of a proscribed religion; and in one of his letters to Lady Mary Wortley Montague, he thus indicates his anomalous position in a tone between jest and earnest: "It is not impossible I may run into Turkey in search of liberty; for who would not rather live a freeman among a nation of slaves, than a slave among a nation of freemen?" Possessing many traits both natural and imitative that invite comparison with Dryden, he disdained to court the patronage of the great by such dedications as fashion had rendered it necessary for even a genius like Dryden to stoop to; and it is equally gratifying and remarkable that this example of independence should have operated so effectively, that the great now paid court to the poet, and considered themselves honoured

by his friendship. As a literary focus, the biography of Pope is highly interesting. By the saturnine and implacable Dean of St. Patrick's he was treated with deference and affection; the gifted and ambitious Bolingbroke was his familiar associate, both when in the zenith of his power and after political changes left him undivided leisure for literary intercourse;—the fiery Atterbury, the gentle Gay, and the witty Arbuthnot; the eloquent and accomplished Murray, at a later period the sole orator capable of coping with the haughty and impetuous invective of the elder Pitt; and "he whose lightning pierced the Iberian lines," the brilliant though erratic Peterborough,—were alike his devoted friends and ardent admirers. His courteously independent reply to Lord Halifax, who volunteered his assistance in the publication of the *Iliad*, seems a sufficient answer to the sneers of Johnson and others at Pope's professed indifference to courtly patronage. Pope died at Twickenham, where he had purchased a property.

A life of such literary activity as his, coupled with so much bodily infirmity, has rarely been paralleled; for his person was diminutive and deformed, and his constitution was so feeble that he himself termed his life a long disease. His portraits do not belie the tradition, that his features were eminently expressive of the genius that triumphed over all these physical disadvantages. Bishop Warburton, his personal friend and literary executor, says that his eye was "fine, sharp, and piercing;" and his voice was so melodious that when a child he was called "the little nightingale." Irritability of temper was undoubtedly one of his frailties; but it should be remembered, on the other hand, that filial affection and warmth of friendship were never more finely illustrated than by the life as well as by the writings of Pope.

Of Pope's *Homer*, Johnson says, "It is certainly the noblest version of poetry which the world has ever seen;" and it is still admitted to be one of the finest poems in the language. It is not undeserving of remark that both Pope and Dryden realized much larger sums by their versions of the Greek and Roman epics than by any other work. Pope's profit amounted to between £5000 and £6000—a sum which secured him independence for

life; although the admirers of his genius cannot but regret that it was so long employed in the comparative drudgery of translation.

The *Essay on Criticism* was written at the age of twenty; the *Rape of the Lock* four years afterwards; and yet, from what source has our literature derived more of its common-places than from these extraordinary productions? In the one, we are fascinated by the skill with which a series of critical precepts are animated by every grace that can be derived from variety of illustration and pointed vigour of expression; and in the other, by that fertility of invention which has created out of a trivial domestic incident a moving pageant of life, combining the real and the ideal in a manner equally novel and felicitous, the whole course of the narrative being at the same time enlivened by the most delicate traits of satire, and embellished by all the luxuriance of fancy. The *Imitations of Horace* are among the most pleasing and characteristic of Pope's writings, and afford a striking example of his facility of composition. In these *Imitations*, of which the first that he wrote was finished in a morning or two, the reader is perpetually gratified with the ingenuity of the parallel, and not unfrequently surprised by the dexterity with which, when a fitting occasion presents itself, the double-edged pen of Pope converts the compliment of his prototype into a stroke of the keenest irony. In the *Dunciad* he may be said to have expressed the quintessence of his genius. That incessant blaze of wit which constitutes a capital charm of all his poems, is here concentrated as in a focus. The *Essay on Man* is replete with those pregnant distichs for which Pope's poetry is so conspicuous. The poems that remain to be mentioned are, *Windsor Forest*, a descriptive piece; the *Temple of Fame*, an adaptation from Chaucer; and the *Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard*, one of his happiest efforts. His minor pieces are numerous.

The tone and spirit of Dryden can easily be traced in the writings of Pope. Like him, he had the art of adorning argument with the seductive charms of wit, harmony, and invention; and, like him also, his greatest strength lay in satire. The *Dunciad* is, in a certain sense, the offspring of *Mac-Flecknoe;* and the *Religio*

*Laici* may have furnished hints for the *Essay on Man*. The heroic couplet, the favourite verse of Dryden, was brought by Pope to the highest pitch of refinement and polish.

The character of Pope's genius, and his rank among the poets as the highest example of the French or critical school, are fully and ably set forth in the following passage:—"The two higher orders of poetry, the epic and dramatic, Pope left entirely untouched; and his essays as a lyrical poet are so few and slight as to require mention only to show that they have not been forgotten. His line was didactic in the enlarged sense of that word; which includes appeals, either principally to the understanding, as in satire both grave and ludicrous, or to the emotions and passions, as in elegy and such epistles as *Eloisa's*—which last, however, approaches nearly to the dramatic, as being, in fact, an impassioned though extended monologue. And in this order of poetry there can be no hesitation in pronouncing Pope to be the first of poets. Who is there, in any age or nation, that can pretend to compete with him? Who has combined such powers of reasoning with such splendid fancy; such concentrated meaning with such melodious verse; such elegant playfulness with such causticity of wit; such dignified reprehension and such noble bursts of moral feeling? All these excellences are in him accompanied with a profusion of imagery, always delighting by aptness of illustration, sometimes by sportiveness and wit, but oftener by its richness and warmth, with a refined delicacy of sentiment and brilliancy of expression, and such a variety of elegant phraseology as the language of no other poet in the same order of poetry can match. All these qualities, however, marvellous as the combination is, do not prove that he was capable of the highest efforts of poetic genius;—that his mind possessed the majesty, magnificence, and scope of Homer; the sublimity of Milton, 'wielding the elements;' or the grandeur and profundity of Shakspeare, sounding the depths of the human heart, and raising and stilling the passions at his bidding. It is therefore high, perhaps the very highest, in the second class, that we rank the poetic genius of Pope."[1]

[1] Quarterly Review, No. LXIV. For the character of Pope's prose, see Johnson, p. 334.

## FROM THE "ESSAY ON MAN."

### THE INTRODUCTION.

Awake, my St. John! leave all meaner things
To low ambition and the pride of kings.
Let us (since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die,)
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;
A mighty maze! but not without a plan;
A wild, where weeds and flowers promiscuous shoot;
Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield;
The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore,
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;
Eye Nature's walks, shoot Folly as it flies,
And catch the Manners living as they rise;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;
But vindicate the ways of God to man.

### THE FUTURE MERCIFULLY CONCEALED.

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:
Or who could suffer being here below!
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
Pleas'd to the last he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.
O blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle marked by Heaven;
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
Hope humbly, then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.
What future bliss he gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be, blest;
The soul, uneasy and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

### GOD THE SOUL OF NATURE.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same;
Great in the earth as in th' ethereal frame;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To Him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all.

### VIRTUE THE TRUE SOURCE OF HAPPINESS.

Know then this truth (enough for man to know),
"Virtue alone is happiness below."
The only point where human bliss stands still,
And tastes the good without the fall to ill;
Where only merit constant pay receives,
Is blessed in what it takes and what it gives;
The joy unequalled, if its end it gain,
And if it lose, attended with no pain:
Without satiety, though e'er so blessed,
And but more relished as the more distressed:
The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,
Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears:
Good, from each object, from each place acquired,
For ever exercised, yet never tired;
Never elated, while one man's oppressed;
Never dejected, while another's blessed;
And where no wants, no wishes can remain,
Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.

## FROM "THE RAPE OF THE LOCK."

### THE TOILET.

And now, unveiled, the toilet stands displayed,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,
With head uncovered, the cosmetic powers.
A heavenly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;

The inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.
Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and here
The various offerings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the goddess with the glittering spoil.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box:
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, *billet-doux*.
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.

DESCRIPTION OF BELINDA.

Not with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair nymphs and well-dressed youths around her shone,
But every eye was fixed on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss and infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those.
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike;
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide:
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face and you'll forget them all.

This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspired to deck,
With shining ringlets, the smooth ivory neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey;

Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

## FROM "THE DUNCIAD."

### THE CAVE OF DULNESS.

In clouded majesty here Dulness shone;
Four guardian Virtues, round, support her throne:
Fierce champion Fortitude, that knows no fears
Of hisses, blows, or want, or loss of ears;
Calm Temperance, whose blessings those partake
Who hunger and who thirst for scribbling sake;
Prudence, whose glass presents the approaching jail;
Poetic Justice, with her lifted scale,
Where, in nice balance, truth with gold she weighs,
And solid pudding against empty praise.
Here she beholds the Chaos dark and deep,
Where nameless Somethings in their causes sleep:
* * * * *
How hints, like spawn, scarce quick in embryo lie;
How new-born nonsense first is taught to cry;
Maggots half formed in rhyme exactly meet,
And learn to crawl upon poetic feet.
Here one poor word an hundred clenches makes,
And ductile dulness new meanders takes:
There motley Images her fancy strike,
Figures ill paired, and Similes unlike.
She sees a mob of Metaphors advance,
Pleased with the madness of the mazy dance;
How Tragedy and Comedy embrace;
How Farce and Epic get a jumbled race,
How Time himself stands still at her command,
Realms shift their place, and Ocean turns to land.
Here, gay description Egypt glads with show'rs,
Or gives to Zembla fruits, to Barca flow'rs;
Glitt'ring with ice, here hoary hills are seen;
There, painted valleys of eternal green;
In cold December fragrant chaplets blow,
And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow.

## FROM THE "ESSAY ON CRITICISM."

### ADVICE TO CRITICS.

Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is pride, the never failing vice of fools.

Whatever nature has in worth denied,
She gives in large recruits of needful pride;
For, as in bodies, thus in souls we find
What wants in blood and spirits swelled with wind:
Pride, where wit fails, steps in to our defence,
And fills up all the mighty void of sense:
If once right reason drives that cloud away,
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
Trust not yourself; but, your defects to know,
Make use of every friend and every foe.
A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There, shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts;
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanced, behold, with strange surprise,
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So, pleased at first, the towering Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky!
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last;
But, those attained, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthened way;
Th' increasing prospect tires our wandering eyes;
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

### EDWARD YOUNG—1681-1765.

The life of this poetical patriarch almost coincides with one of our poetical cycles. As a satirist he anticipated Pope, having published his *Universal Passion* between 1725 and 1728; and in that department he displayed a power which none of his contemporaries, save the unrivalled bard of Twickenham, equalled or surpassed. The *Night Thoughts*, the poem to which he chiefly owes his fame, is as pre-eminently original as it is unquestionably a work of great poetical genius. Dealing with the most momentous subjects that can occupy the human imagination, "Life, Death, and Immortality," it will always exercise for serious readers a power entirely independent of its literary merit; but no reader can fail to be struck by the knowledge of life and character, the striking

imagery, the variety of illustration, and the occasional bursts of fancy and sublimity, with which the poet enforces and embellishes his theme. In his love of epigram and antithesis he strongly reminds us of Pope.

Edward Young was born at Upham, where his father was rector, and received his education at Winchester College, until he was transferred to Oxford, where he obtained the degree of Doctor of Laws in 1719. Having taken orders in the Church, he was made rector of Welwyn in Hertfordshire, after having been appointed chaplain to George II. Young was a prolific writer, and died in the full enjoyment of intellectual vigour, having composed his *Conjectures on Original Composition* when he was in his eighty-fourth year.

### MAN'S INCONSISTENCY.

NIGHT II.

Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself
Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
We censure Nature for a span too short;
That span too short we tax as tedious too;
Torture invention, all expedients tire,
To lash the lingering moments into speed,
And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.
Art, brainless Art! our furious charioteer,
(For Nature's voice unstifled would recall,)
Drives headlong towards the precipice of death,
Death most our dread; death thus more dreadful made.
O what a riddle of absurdity!
Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot wheels;
How heavily we drag the load of life!
Bless'd leisure is our curse; like that of Cain,
It makes us wander, wander earth around,
To fly that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groan'd
The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour:
We cry for mercy to the next amusement;
The next amusement mortgages our fields;
Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,
From hateful Time if prisons set us free.
Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief,
We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,
Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd.

To man's false optics (from his folly false)
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age.
Behold him when pass'd by; what then is seen
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?
And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
Rueful, aghast! cry out on his career.

### DEATH A BLESSING.

NIGHT III.

And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?
Death! the great counsellor, who man inspires
With every nobler thought and fairer deed!
Death! the deliverer, who rescues man!
Death! the rewarder, who the rescued crowns!
Death! that absolves my birth, a curse without it!
Rich Death! that realizes all my cares,
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!
Death! of all pain the period, not of joy;
Joy's source, and subject, still subsist unhurt;
One in my soul, and one in her great Sire,
Though the four winds were warring for my dust.
Yes, and from winds, and waves, and central night,
Though prison'd there, my dust, too, I reclaim,
(To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres)
And live entire. Death is the crown of life;
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;
Were death denied, to live would not be life:
Were death denied, e'en fools would wish to die.
Death wounds to cure; we fall; we rise, we reign,
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies.
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight,
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost.
The king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
When shall I die? When shall I live for ever?

### NATURE AN EMBLEM OF MAN.

NIGHT VI.

Look nature through, 'tis revolution all;
All change, no death: day follows night, and night
The dying day: stars rise, and set, and rise:
Earth takes the example. See, the Summer gay,
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
Droops into pallid Autumn: Winter gray,

Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away,
Then melts into the Spring: soft Spring, with breath
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
Recalls the first. All, to reflourish, fades:
As in a wheel, all sinks to re-ascend:
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

### NIGHT APOSTROPHIZED.

#### NIGHT IX.

O majestic Night!
Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder born,
And fated to survive the transient Sun!
By mortals and immortals seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in heaven's loom
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form; and, heaven throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train:
Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's most august,
Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse,
And, like a sable curtain starr'd with gold,
Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.

Young has many fine images, and abounds in pointed and pregnant thoughts.

Pigmies are pigmies still, though perched on Alps.

Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name.

Sense is our helmet, wit is but the plume.

An undevout astronomer is mad.

Like our shadows,
Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.

They that on glorious ancestors enlarge,
Produce their debt, instead of their discharge.

Narcissa (his daughter-in-law) is thus described:—

Early, bright, transient, chaste as morning dew,
She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to heaven.

Apostrophizing other worlds, he asks,—

> Sit all your executioners on thrones?
> With you can rage for plunder make a god,
> And bloodshed wash out every other stain?

### JAMES THOMSON—1700–1748.

The Poet of the Seasons was born at Ednam in Roxburghshire, in 1700. His father, who was minister of his native parish, sent him to the University of Edinburgh with the intention of studying for the Church. Displeased or discouraged by an unfavourable professorial criticism of one of his exercises, Thomson resolved to devote himself entirely to poetry, and with scarcely a pair of shoes on his feet, and the manuscript of *Winter* as his only property, he repaired to London, as the most promising field for the exercise of his talents. The publication of his poem, in 1726, soon procured him fame, fortune, and friends; a third edition was wanted in the course of the first year; and in 1728 *The Four Seasons* were published by subscription. In 1731 he accompanied as travelling companion the son of Lord Chancellor Talbot to the Continent; and that nobleman afterwards conferred upon him a lucrative appointment in Chancery, which he retained until the death of his patron. He subsequently obtained a pension of £100 per annum, besides the office of Surveyor General of the Leeward Islands; from which, after paying his deputy, he derived an income of £300 more. He died at his villa at Richmond in 1748.

*The Seasons* resembles many of our finest poems in being an early effort of genius. In point of mere style it is not considered equal to *The Castle of Indolence*, where greater selection and economy of expression display maturity of art. A great deal of the criticism on *The Seasons* consists in an expansion of Johnson's colloquial remark, in which he sums up both its merits and its defects: "Thomson had a true poetical genius, the power of viewing everything in a poetical light. His fault is such a cloud of words sometimes that the sense can hardly peep through." It must, however, be evident, that to treat such a subject as *The Seasons*, in succession, diffuseness and amplification of style was an

absolute necessity. It must also strike every reader of the poets that the style of *The Seasons* is eminently original, both in the use of particular phrases and in the turn of the sentences; the compound epithets of which he makes such frequent use would not perhaps appear very happily yoked if used anywhere else, but it is seldom that we find them inappropriate when used by Thomson. One of the most objectionable of the peculiarities of that poem is the tediousness and impertinence of the episodes, and the introduction of such dissertations as that on the origin of frost. In contrasting Thomson with Pope, it is, or used to be, the favourite device of a narrow school of criticism, (not the less narrow because it has the authority of great names,) to assume in the reader the antagonism of faculties that are more naturally in unison, and to suppose that what is more peculiarly gratifying to the intellect cannot be enjoyed without a corresponding sacrifice of the pleasures afforded by the feelings and affections. According to this theory, the elegance and refinement of Pope can only be appreciated by those who are insensible to the natural beauties and rural simplicity of Thomson. But Pope himself was an admirer of Thomson. Notwithstanding the universal passion for rhyme that had been inspired by the greatest of its masters, the blank verse of *The Seasons* proved no obstacle to its success; and, in an age that has been condemned as deficient in poetical appreciation, the Poet of Art and the Bard of Nature enjoyed contemporary renown without rivalry or partisanship. The recent discovery that Pope himself contributed to *The Seasons* some of those passages that are now the most admired, materially damages Wordsworth's explanation of the assumed difficulty in his celebrated preface.

A SHOWER IN SPRING.

The North-east spends his rage : he now shut up
Within his iron cave, th' effusive South
Warms the wide air, and o'er the void of heaven
Breathes the big clouds with vernal showers distent.
At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise,
Scarce staining ether ; but by swift degrees,
In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapour sails
Along the loaded sky, and, mingling deep,

Sits on th' horizon round, a settled gloom:
Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
Oppressing life; but lovely, gentle, kind,
And full of every hope and every joy,
The wish of nature. Gradual sinks the breeze
Into a perfect calm; that not a breath
Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
Or rustling turn the many twinkling leaves
Of aspen tall. The uncurling floods, diffused
In glassy breadth, seem through delusive lapse
Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all,
And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
Drop the dry sprig, and, mute-imploring, eye
The falling verdure. Hushed in short suspense,
The plumy people streak their wings with oil,
To throw the lucid moisture trickling off;
And wait th' approaching sign to strike at once
Into the general choir. Even mountains, vales,
And forests, seem, impatient, to demand
The promised sweetness. Man superior walks
Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
And looking lively gratitude. At last,
The clouds consign their treasures to the fields;
And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,
In large effusion, o'er the freshened world.
The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard
By such as wander through the forest walks
Beneath the umbrageous multitude of leaves.
But who can hold the shade, while heaven descends
In universal bounty, shedding herbs,
And fruits, and flowers, on Nature's ample lap?
Swift fancy, fired, anticipates their growth;
And, while the milky nutriment distils,
Beholds the kindling country colour round.

### SUNRISE.

But yonder comes the powerful king of day,
Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow
Illumed with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo! now apparent all,
Aslant the dew-bright earth, and coloured air,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad;
And sheds the shining day, that burnished plays
On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering streams,

High-gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer, light!
Of all material beings first, and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's resplendent robe!
Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapt
In unessential gloom; and thou, O sun!
Soul of surrounding worlds! in whom best seen
Shines out thy Maker! may I sing of thee?

* * * * *

The vegetable world is also thine,
Parent of seasons! who the pomp precede
That waits thy throne, as through thy vast domain,
Annual, along the bright ecliptic road,
In world-rejoicing state, it moves sublime.
Meantime, th' expecting nations, circled gay,
With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
Implore thy bounty, or send grateful up
A common hymn; while, round thy beaming car,
High-seen, the Seasons lead, in sprightly dance
Harmonious knit, the rosy fingered Hours,
The Zephyrs floating loose, the timely Rains,
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed Dews,
And softened into joy the surly Storms.
These, in successive turn, with lavish hand,
Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower,
Herbs, flowers, and fruits; till, kindling at thy touch,
From land to land is flushed the vernal year.

## A WINTER STORM.

When from the pallid sky the sun descends,
With many a spot, that o'er his glaring orb
Uncertain wanders, stained, red fiery streaks
Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds
Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
Which master to obey; while rising slow,
Blank, in the leaden-coloured east, the moon
Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns.
Seen through the turbid, fluctuating air,
The stars, obtuse, emit a shivered ray;
Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,
And long behind them trail the whitening blaze.
Snatched in short eddies, plays the withered leaf;
And on the flood the dancing feather floats.
With broadened nostrils to the sky upturned,
The conscious heifer snuffs the stormy gale.
Even as the matron, at her nightly task,
With pensive labour draws the flaxen thread,

The wasted taper and the crackling flame
Foretell the blast. But chief the plumy race,
The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
Retiring from the downs, where all day long
They picked their scanty fare, a blackening train
Of clamorous rooks thick urge their weary flight,
And seek the closing shelter of the grove.
Assiduous, in his bower, the wailing owl
Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land.
Loud shrieks the soaring heron; and with wild wing
The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
Ocean, unequal pressed, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave,
And forest-rustling mountain, comes a voice,
That, solemn sounding, bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurls the whole precipitated air
Down in a torrent. On the passive main
Descends th' ethereal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discoloured deep.
Through the black night, that sits immense around,
Lashed into foam, the fierce, conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn:
Meantime the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swelled, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchored navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds across the howling waste
Of mighty waters: now th' inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,
The wintry Baltic thundering o'er their head.
Emerging thence again, before the breath
Of full-exerted heaven they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts; if some sharp rock,
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

### THE FALL OF THE LEAF.

The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful grove,
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
And slowly circles through the waving air.

But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till, choked and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the withered waste, and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. Even what remained
Of stronger fruits falls from the naked tree;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around,
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

### MOONLIGHT IN AUTUMN.

The western sun withdraws the shortened day;
And humid Evening, gliding o'er the sky,
In her chill progress, to the ground condensed
The vapours throws. Where creeping waters ooze,
Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,
Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along
The dusky-mantled lawn. Meanwhile the Moon,
Full-orbed, and breaking through the scattered clouds,
Shows her broad visage in the crimsoned east.
Turned to the Sun direct, her spotted disc,
Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,
And caverns deep, as optic tube descries,
A smaller Earth, gives us his blaze again,
Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.
Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.
Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
O'er the skied mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.

## JOHN GAY—1688-1732.

This sweet and pleasing poet was a native of Devonshire. He was apprenticed to a silk-mercer in London, but his poetical talents soon attracted the notice of Pope and the literary celebrities of the time, and obtained for him the patronage of the great. He became secretary to Anne, Duchess of Monmouth, and in 1714 accompanied the embassy to Hanover. He

realized considerable sums by his writings; but he was of an improvident disposition, and died in the house of the Duke of Queensberry, by whom he had for some time been supported.

*Gay's Fables*, written in a lively and natural style, are considered the best of his poetical works. *The Shepherd's Week*, and *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets*, are happy specimens of the mock-heroic style. *The Beggar's Opera*, which was the origin of the English opera, is a perennial favourite on the stage.

### THE COURT OF DEATH.

Death on a solemn night of state,
In all his pomp of terror sat;
Th' attendants of his gloomy reign,
Diseases dire, a ghastly train,
Crowd the vast court. With hollow tone
A voice thus thundered from the throne:—
"This night our minister we name;
Let every servant speak his claim;
Merit shall bear this ebon wand."
All, at the word, stretch forth their hand.
Fever, with burning heat possessed,
Advanced, and for the wand addressed:—
"I to the weekly bills appeal,
Let those express my fervent zeal:
On every slight occasion near
With violence I persevere."
Next Gout appears with limping pace;
Pleads how he shifts from place to place;
From head to foot how swift he flies,
And every joint and sinew plies;
Still working when he seems supprest,—
A most tenacious, stubborn guest.

* * * *

Stone urged his ever-growing force;
And, next, Consumption's meagre corse,
With feeble voice that scarce was heard,
Broke with short coughs, his suit preferred:—
"Let none object my lingering way
I gain, like Fabius, by delay;
Fatigue and weaken every foe,
By long attack, secure, though slow."
Plague represents his rapid power,
Who thinned a nation in an hour.

All spoke their claim, and hoped the wand;
Now expectation hushed the band,
When thus the monarch from the throne:—
"Merit was ever modest known.
What! no physician speak his right!—
None here?—but fees their toils requite.
Let, then, Intemperance take the wand,
Who fills with gold their zealous hand.
You, Fever, Gout, and all the rest,
(Whom wary men as foes detest,)
Forego your claim; no more pretend:
Intemperance is esteemed a friend;
He shares their mirth, their social joys,
And, as a courted guest, destroys.
The charge on him must justly fall
Who finds employment for you all."

### WILLIAM COLLINS—1720–1756.

The career of this highly gifted son of song was brief and melancholy. He was born in Chichester of humble parentage, and was educated at Winchester and Oxford. At an early age we find him in London, where, like Johnson, with whom he became acquainted, and many brother poets, his literary exertions were insufficient to preserve him from penury and debt. From this miserable condition he was rescued by a legacy of £2000 left him by an uncle; but he did not long enjoy his good fortune. He was subject to fits of mental depression, which at length terminated in insanity; and after having been some time in a lunatic asylum, in his thirty-sixth year he died.

Hazlitt remarks of Collins, "that he is the only one of the minor poets, of whom, if he had lived, it cannot be said that he might not have done the greatest things." His principal pieces, besides the celebrated *Ode on the Passions*, are his *Ode to Evening*, *Ode to Fear*, *Dirge in Cymbeline*, and *Lines on Thomson's Grave*.

#### THE PASSIONS.

When Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,

Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possessed beyond the Muse's painting:
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined;
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for Madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.

First, Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And back recoiled, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next, Anger rushed; his eyes on fire
In lightnings owned his secret stings:
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair,
Low, sullen sounds, his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on Echo still, through all the song:
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.

And longer had she sung;—but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose:
He threw his blood-stained sword, in thunder, down;
And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe!
And, ever and anon, he beat
The doubling drum, with furious heat;

And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fixed—
Sad proof of thy distressful state;
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed;
And now it courted Love, now raving called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sat retired,
And, from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound:
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But, O! how altered was its sprightlier tone
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known!
The oak-crowned Sisters, and their chaste-eyed queen,
Satyrs and sylvan boys were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green:
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial.
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk-awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best.
They would have thought who heard the strain,
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids,
Amidst the festal-sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kissed the strings,

Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round:
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess! why, to us denied,
Layest thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As in that loved Athenian bower
You learned an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard;
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that god-like age,
Fill thy recording sister's page—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound—
O bid our vain endeavour cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece;
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

### THOMAS GRAY—1716-1771.

Thomas Gray was born in London, where his father was a money-scrivener; studied at Eton and Cambridge; and in 1768 was made Professor of Modern History in that University. At the invitation of Horace Walpole, of whom he had been the fellow-student, he accompanied him on a tour to the Continent, where they travelled for five years; and on his return he devoted himself almost entirely to studious retirement, the monotony of which was only interrupted by a journey into Scotland, and afterwards to the lakes of England, in search of health. He died in 1771 of gout of the stomach.

Gray is one of the most learned of the poets, and all his pieces

evince the exquisite refinement of his taste and his command over numbers, while not a few of his finest passages are scarcely surpassed in imaginative beauty and force. On the publication of *The Progress of Poesy* and *The Bard*, in 1757, "the readers of poetry," says Johnson, "were content to gaze in mute amazement;" and he afterwards adds, "that many were content to be shown beauties which they could not see." The acknowledged beauties of these magnificent odes the arch-critic himself was either unable or unwilling to see, although, in his remarks on the far-famed *Elegy*, he admits that "had Gray often written thus, it had been vain to blame and useless to praise him." It is generally felt that the limited amount of Gray's poetry has prevented him from holding that rank among the poets to which the more frequent exercise of his genius would have entitled him. His *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard* is one of the acknowledged master-pieces of English poetry; and among his smaller pieces are, *The Ode to Spring*, *Hymn to Adversity*, and *The Ode on the Prospect of Eton College*. For ease and beauty his letters are equalled only by those of Cowper.

### THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

#### A PINDARIC ODE.

I.

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take;
The laughing flowers that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales and Ceres' golden reign;
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour:
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

Oh! sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen cares
And frantic passions hear thy soft control:

On Thracia's hills the lord of war
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command:
Perching on the sceptered hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing:
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak and lightning of his eye.

Thee the voice, the dance obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay,
O'er Idalia's velvet green
The rosy-crowned Loves are seen,
On Cytherea's day,
With antic Sports and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay;
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

II.

Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labour and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky:
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom,
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.

And oft beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
Th' unconquerable mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

Woods that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crowned the Ægean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful Echoes languish
Mute, but to the voice of Anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound;
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh, Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III.

Far from the Sun and summer gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
"This pencil take," she said, "whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine, too, these golden keys, immortal boy!
This can unlock the gates of Joy;
Of Horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

Nor second he that rode sublime
Upon the seraph wings of ecstasy,
The secrets of the abyss to spy.
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,

He saw; but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.

Hark! his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.
But, ah! 'tis heard no more—
Oh, lyre divine! what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air:
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrowed of the Sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good, how far! but far above the great.

## MINOR POETS.

*The Pleasures of the Imagination*, by MARK AKENSIDE (1721–1770), is a didactic poem in blank verse, characterized by great beauty of expression and fertility of illustration. The mind of the writer was richly stored with learning, and his versification has been highly praised. Amongst the pieces of this period, once familiar to our Collections, are *The Grave* by BLAIR; the pleasing pastoral ballad of SHENSTONE; *Grongar Hill*, a descriptive poem by DYER; and the ballad of *William and Margaret* by MALLET, who divides with Thomson the reputed authorship of *Rule Britannia*. DR. THOMAS PARNELL (1679–1717), a native of Dublin, though of English parentage, enjoyed in London, where he chiefly resided, the society and friendship of Addison, Pope, and the other wits of the day. The merit of his poetical pieces, the principal of which are *The Hermit*, and a *Night Piece on Death*, consists in a certain mild pathos with sweetness and simplicity of diction. *The Gentle*

*Shepherd* of ALLAN RAMSAY (1686–1758), written in the Scottish dialect, is generally admitted to be the finest specimen of the pastoral drama that is known to exist.

### THE DRAMA.

One of the most remarkable dramatic pieces of this period, which is neither so fertile in comedy nor tragedy as its predecessor, is *The Beggar's Opera* of GAY, written with the view of burlesquing the Italian Opera, then a fashionable novelty that had been ridiculed by Addison as absurd and unnatural. The ultimate result of *The Beggar's Opera*, however, did not prove to be the abolition of the Italian, but the establishment of the English Opera. A modification of the school of Wycherley and Congreve, termed Genteel Comedy, is represented by *The Careless Husband* of COLLEY CIBBER the actor, a lively and entertaining writer, not very felicitously selected by Pope as the hero of the second *Dunciad*. In contemporary tragedy the highest place belongs to NICHOLAS ROWE, author of *Jane Shore* and *The Fair Penitent*. The latter was an unacknowledged plagiarism of *The Fatal Dowry* by Field and Massinger; but Rowe is entitled to all the praise that is due to its harmonious diction. He also translated Lucan's *Pharsalia* into English verse. *The Tragedy of Cato* by ADDISON enjoyed a factitious celebrity on its production, owing to the violence of political feeling; but it is now remembered only for a few passages. *The Revenge*, a tragedy by the author of the *Night Thoughts*, which was frequently represented on the stage during the last generation, would appear to have fallen into oblivion.

## II.—PROSE WRITERS.

### SIR RICHARD STEELE—1671-1729.

Sir Richard Steele, "the Father of Periodical Literature," was born at Dublin in 1671, his father being private secretary to the Duke of Ormond. He was sent to be educated at the Charter House in London, where was formed the long and intimate friendship between him and Addison; and he afterwards spent a short

time at the University of Oxford. In 1709 he commenced *The Tatler*, with the object, as set forth in the dedication, to expose the false arts of life; to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and affectation; and to recommend a general simplicity in dress and behaviour. It was followed by *The Spectator* in 1711, and *The Guardian* in 1713; the contributions to which were chiefly Addison's and his own. In literary power and purity of style his essays are eclipsed by those of his illustrious coadjutor; but they nevertheless present a combination of lively fancy, pleasing allegory, critical taste, and playful satire; while his sketches of character evince both variety and dramatic felicity of portraiture. Although extravagant and too convivial in his habits, Steele was an ardent friend to virtue; and his writings powerfully contributed to banish from the stage the ribaldry that from the time of the Restoration had made it the chief centre of immorality. He was one of the Commissioners of Stamps in the reign of Anne, was knighted on the accession of George I., and was a Member of Parliament during both reigns. He died in 1729.

### ON FLATTERERS.

The Latin word for a flatterer (*assentator*) implies no more than a person that barely consents; and indeed such a one, if a man were able to purchase or maintain him, cannot be bought too dear. Such a one never contradicts you, but gains upon you, not by a fulsome way of commending you in broad terms, but liking whatever you propose or utter; at the same time he is ready to beg your pardon, and gainsay you, if you chance to speak ill of yourself. An old lady is very seldom without such a companion as this, who can recite the names of all her lovers, and the matches refused by her in the days when she minded such vanities (as she is pleased to call them, though she so much approves the mention of them). It is to be noted, that a woman's flatterer is generally elder than herself, her years serving to recommend her patroness's age, and to add weight to her complaisance in all other particulars.

We gentlemen of small fortunes are extremely necessitous in this particular. I have, indeed, one who smokes with me often; but his parts are so low, that all the incense he does me is to fill his pipe with mé, and to be out at just as many whiffs as I take. This is all the praise or assent that he is capable of, yet there are more hours when I would rather be in his company than that of the brightest man I know. It would be a hard matter to give an account of this inclination to be flattered; but if we go to the bottom of it, we shall find that the pleasure in it is something like that of receiving money which lay out.

Every man thinks he has an estate of reputation, and is glad to see one that will bring any of it home to him; it is no matter how dirty a bag it is conveyed in, or by how clownish a messenger, so the money is good. All that we want to be pleased with flattery, is to believe that the man is sincere who gives it us. It is by this one accident that absurd creatures often outrun the most skilful in this art. Their want of ability is here an advantage; and their bluntness, as it is the seeming effect of sincerity, is the best cover to artifice.

Terence introduces a flatterer talking to a coxcomb, whom he cheats out of a livelihood; and a third person on the stage makes on him this pleasant remark, "This fellow has an art of making fools madmen." The love of flattery is indeed sometimes the weakness of a great mind; but you see it also in persons who otherwise discover no manner of relish of anything above mere sensuality. These latter it sometimes improves, but always debases the former. A fool is in himself the object of pity till he is flattered. By the force of that, his stupidity is raised into affectation, and he becomes of dignity enough to be ridiculous. I remember a droll, that upon one's saying "The times are so ticklish that there must great care be taken what one says in conversation," answered, with an air of surliness and honesty, "If people will be free, let them be so in the manner that I am, who never abuse a man but to his face." He had no reputation for saying dangerous truths, therefore when it was repeated, "You abuse a man but to his face?" "Yes," says he, "I flatter him."

## JOSEPH ADDISON—1672-1719.

Joseph Addison, tne son of Launcelot Addison, Dean of Lichfield, was born in Wiltshire in 1672. The commencement of his friendship with Steele at the Charter House, and their subsequent literary connection, have been alluded to in the notice of that writer. At Oxford he was highly distinguished for his abilities and scholarship; and in admiration of his poetical genius, Lord Somers in 1699 obtained for him a pension of £300 per annum, in order that he might gratify his desire of travelling on the Continent. One of the fruits of this tour was his poetical *Letter from Italy*, addressed to Lord Halifax. At the desire of Lord Treasurer Godolphin, he wrote his poem entitled *The Campaign*, in celebration of the victory of Blenheim, and was appointed to the office of Commissioner of Appeals that had been vacated by Locke. In 1705 he accompanied Lord Halifax on his mission to Hanover; was made Under Secretary of State in the following year; and in 1708 he took his seat in the House of Commons. In the same year he was appointed Secretary to the Marquis of Wharton, Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland; and it was during his residence at Dublin in that capacity that he became a contributor to *The Tatler*. In 1717 he was made one of the Secretaries of State; but his health had begun to fail, and having, besides, no capacity for parliamentary debate, he retired from office in the following year, and died in 1719.

The fame of Addison depends upon his papers in *The Spectator*, to which he contributed a greater number than Steele. He also wrote the tragedy of *Cato*, composed in obedience to the strict rules of the drama, and published in 1713. It has many fine declamatory passages, but wants the vital elements of character and passion. The merits of this amiable and able writer are thus summed up by one of his best commentators :—

"To Addison, in the first place, may we ascribe the formation of a style truly classical and pure, whose simplicity and grace have not yet been surpassed; and which, presenting a model of unprecedented elegance, laid the foundation for a general and increasing attention to the beauty and harmony of composition.

"His critical powers were admirably adapted to awaken and inform the public mind; to teach the general principles by which excellence may be attained; and, above all, to infuse a relish for the noblest productions of taste and genius.

"In humour, no man in this country, save Shakspeare, has excelled him : he possessed the faculty of an almost intuitive discrimination of what was ludicrous and characteristic in each individual; and, at the same time, the most happy facility in so tinting and grouping his paintings, that, whilst he never overstepped the modesty of nature, the result was alike rich in comic effect, in warmth of colouring, and in originality of design.

"Though his poetry, it must be confessed, is not remarkable for the energies of fancy, the tales, visions, and allegories dispersed through his periodical writings, make abundant recompense for the defect, and very amply prove, that in the conception and execution of these exquisite pieces, no talent of the genuine bard, except that of versification, lay dormant or unemployed.

"It is, however, the appropriate, the transcendent praise of

Addison, that he steadily and uniformly, and in a manner peculiarly his own, exerted these great qualities in teaching and disseminating a love for morality and religion. He it was who, following the example of the divine Socrates, first stripped Philosophy in this island of her scholastic garb, and bade her, clothed in the robes of elegant simplicity, allure and charm the multitude. He saw his countrymen become better as they became wiser; he saw them, through his instructions, feel and own the beauty of holiness and virtue: and for this, we may affirm, posterity, however distant or refined, shall revere and bless his memory."[1]

### THE JACOBITE FOX-HUNTER.

FROM "THE FREEHOLDER."

I was travelling towards one of the remotest parts of England, when, about three o'clock in the afternoon, seeing a country gentleman trotting before me with a spaniel by his horse's side, I made up to him. Our conversation opened, as usual, upon the weather; in which we were very unanimous, having both agreed that it was too dry for the season of the year. My fellow-traveller, upon this, observed to me, there had been no good weather since the Revolution. I was a little startled at so extraordinary a remark, but would not interrupt him till he proceeded to tell me of the fine weather they used to have in King Charles II.'s reign. I only answered, that I did not see how the badness of the weather could be the King's fault; and, without waiting for his reply, asked him whose house it was we saw upon a rising ground at a little distance from us. He told me it belonged to an old fanatical cur, Mr. Such-a-one. "You must have heard of him," says he; "he is one of the Rump." I knew the gentleman's character upon hearing his name, but assured him that to my knowledge he was a good Churchman. "Ay," says he, with a kind of surprise; "we are told in the country that he spoke twice in the Queen's time against taking off the duties upon French claret." This naturally led us into the proceedings of late Parliaments; upon which occasion he affirmed roundly, that there had not been one good law passed since King William's accession to the throne, except the Act for preserving the game. I had a mind to see him out, and therefore did not care for contradicting him. "Is it not hard," says he, "that honest gentlemen should be taken into custody of messengers, to prevent them from acting according to their consciences?" . . . . . He was going on in a great passion, but chanced to miss his dog, who was amusing himself about a bush that grew at some distance behind us. We stood still until he had whistled him up; when he fell into a long panegyric upon his spaniel, who seemed indeed excellent in his kind: but I found the most remarkable adventure of his life was, that he had once like to have worried a dissenting teacher. The master could hardly sit on his horse for laughing all the while he was giving me the particulars of this story, which, I found,

[1] Drake's Essays.

had mightily endeared his dog to him, and, as he himself told me, had made him a great favourite among all the honest gentlemen of the country. We were at length diverted from this piece of mirth by a post-boy, who, winding his horn at us, my companion gave him two or three curses, and left the way clear for him. "I fancy," said I, "that post brings news from Scotland. I shall long to see the next *Gazette*." "Sir," says he, "I make it a rule never to believe any of your printed news. We never see, sir, how things go, except now and then in Dyer's Letter; and I read that more for the style than the news. The man has a clever pen, it must be owned. But is it not strange that we should be making war upon Church of England men, with Dutch and Swiss soldiers, men of anti-monarchical principles? These foreigners will never be loved in England, sir; they have not that wit and good breeding that we have." I must confess, I did not expect to hear my new acquaintance value himself upon these qualifications; but finding him such a critic upon foreigners, I asked him if he had ever travelled? He told me he did not know what travelling was good for, but to teach a man to ride the great horse, to jabber French, and to talk against passive obedience: to which he added, that he scarce ever knew a traveller in his life who had not forsook his principles, and lost his hunting seat.

## THE MOUNTAIN OF MISERIES.

It is a celebrated thought of Socrates, that if all the misfortunes of mankind were cast into a public stock, in order to be equally distributed among the whole species, those who now think themselves the most unhappy would prefer the share they are already possessed of before that which would fall to them by such a division. As I was ruminating upon this, and seated in my elbow-chair, I insensibly fell asleep, when, on a sudden, methought there was a proclamation made by Jupiter, that every mortal should bring in his griefs and calamities, and throw them together in a heap. There was a large plain appointed for this purpose. I took my stand in the centre of it, and saw, with a great deal of pleasure, the whole human species marching one after another, and throwing down their several loads, which immediately grew up into a prodigious mountain, that seemed to rise above the clouds. There was a certain lady, of a thin, airy shape, who was very active in this solemnity. She carried a magnifying-glass in one of her hands, and was clothed in a loose, flowing robe, embroidered with several figures of fiends and spectres, that discovered themselves in a thousand chimerical shapes as her garments hovered in the wind. There was something wild and distracted in her looks. Her name was Fancy. She led up every mortal to the appointed place, after having very officiously assisted him in making up his pack, and laying it upon his shoulders. My heart melted within me to see my fellow-creatures groaning under their respective burdens, and to consider that prodigious bulk of human calamities which lay before me. There were, however, several persons who gave me great diversion. Upon this occasion I observed one bringing in a fardel,[1] very carefully concealed under an old embroidered cloak, which, upon his throwing it into the heap, I discovered to be

[1] A burden.

poverty. I saw multitudes of old women throw down their wrinkles, and several young ones who stripped themselves of a tawny skin. There were very great heaps of red noses, large lips, and rusty teeth. But what most of all surprised me was a remark I made, that there was not a single vice or folly thrown into the whole heap; at which I was very much astonished, having concluded within myself that every one would take this opportunity of getting rid of his passions, prejudices, and frailties. I took notice in particular of a very profligate fellow, who, I did not question, came loaden with his crimes; but, upon searching into his bundle, I found that, instead of throwing his guilt from him, he had only laid down his memory. He was followed by another worthless rogue, who flung away his modesty instead of his ignorance. When the whole race of mankind had thus cast down their burdens, the phantom which had been so busy on this occasion, seeing me an idle spectator of what passed, approached towards me. I grew uneasy at her presence, when of a sudden she held her magnifying-glass full before my eyes. I no sooner saw my face in it than I was startled at the shortness of it, which now appeared to me in its utmost aggravation. The immoderate breadth of the features made me very much out of humour with my own countenance, upon which I threw it from me like a mask. It happened, very luckily, that one who stood by me had just before thrown down his visage, which, it seems, was too long for him. It was indeed extended to a most shameful length; I believe the very chin was, modestly speaking, as long as my whole face.

As we were regarding very attentively this confusion of miseries, this chaos of calamity, Jupiter issued out a second proclamation, that every one was now at liberty to exchange his affliction, and return to his habitation with any such bundle as should be allotted to him. Upon this, Fancy began again to bestir herself, and, parcelling out the whole heap with incredible activity, recommended to every one his particular packet. The hurry and confusion at this time were not to be expressed. A poor galley-slave, who had thrown down his chains, took up the gout instead, but made such wry faces that one might easily perceive he was no great gainer by the bargain. It was pleasant enough to see the several exchanges that were made,—for sickness against poverty, hunger against want of appetite, and care against pain. . . . . The heap was at last distributed among the two sexes, who made a most piteous sight as they wandered up and down under the pressure of their several burdens. The whole plain was filled with murmurs and complaints, groans and lamentations. Jupiter at length, taking compassion on the poor mortals, ordered them a second time to lay down their loads, with a design to give every one his own again. They discharged themselves with a great deal of pleasure, after which the phantom who had led them into such gross delusions was commanded to disappear. There was sent in her stead a goddess of a quite different figure; her motions were steady and composed, and her aspect serious, but cheerful. She every now and then cast her eyes towards heaven and fixed them upon Jupiter. Her name was Patience. She had no sooner placed herself by the Mount of Sorrows than, what I thought very remarkable, the whole heap sunk to such a degree that it did not appear a third part so big as it was before. She afterwards returned every man his own proper calamity, and, teaching him how to bear it in the most commodious manner, he

marched off with it contentedly, being very well pleased that he had not been left to his own choice as to the kind of evils which fell to his lot.

Besides the several pieces of morality to be drawn out of this vision, I learnt from it never to repine at my own misfortunes, or to envy the happiness of another, since it is impossible for any man to form a right judgment of his neighbour's sufferings; for which reason also I have determined never to think too lightly of another's complaints, but to regard the sorrows of my fellow-creatures with sentiments of humanity and compassion.

## DANIEL DE FOE—1661-1731.

De Foe is one of those personages who claim our attention for their active and prominent participation in public affairs as well as for their writings. His father was a butcher, and he is supposed to have been educated with the view of becoming a dissenting minister; but that intention was not carried out; for he engaged in various mercantile speculations, but ultimately devoted himself entirely to literature for subsistence. He threw himself into the arena of politics at an early age, having published his first pamphlet in 1682, and afterwards joined Monmouth's ill-fated expedition; but he had the good fortune to escape the bloody vengeance that was so freely dealt out upon the rebels. In 1701 he published *The True Born Englishman*, a satirical poem in defence of King William, which obtained him from that prince an audience and a present of money. In 1703 he was put in the pillory, fined, and imprisoned in Newgate, for an ironical pamphlet entitled *The Shortest Way with Dissenters;* and in 1706 he was sent by Government to Edinburgh on a mission of no less importance than the promotion of the Union. In 1713 he was again fined and subjected to a short imprisonment for political writings; and after this misfortune he employed his genius in a field where he has few rivals. In 1719 appeared the first part of *Robinson Crusoe*, a work upon whose unparalleled popularity it is unnecessary to dwell. Its success led to the production of other works of fiction, including *The History of Colonel Jack*, *The Memoirs of a Cavalier*, *The Adventures of Captain Singleton*, *The History of the Plague*, &c.

The style of De Foe is modelled to some extent upon that of

Bunyan. It is simple and idiomatic, and his narratives have an appearance of reality that distinguishes him from every other writer of fiction but Swift. This impression is materially aided by a diffuseness of language and a minuteness of detail, which the art of the author never permits to produce a feeling of tediousness. Like the renowned Dean of St. Patrick's, he was also gifted with a powerful vein of satire; but that talent is only displayed in his political works, where he employs it in the service of civil and religious freedom, and not, like his famous contemporary, for the purpose of libelling and humiliating the whole human race.

The familiarity of all readers with the most characteristic of this author's productions, renders any quotation superfluous.

### JONATHAN SWIFT—1667-1745.

This remarkable man was born in Dublin in 1667. He studied at Trinity College there, and afterwards at Oxford; and was for some years the secretary and companion of his relation Sir William Temple, with whom he resided at his seat at Moor Park until Sir William's death in 1698. In 1713 he was presented with the deanery of St. Patrick's; an appointment which he owed to his support of the Tory party, although his first political tract (1701) was written in defence of the Whig noblemen who had been impeached by the House of Commons. In the struggle for power during the reign of Anne, he had deserted his old friends, and amongst others Addison and Steele, and attached himself to Harley and Bolingbroke, whom he served most effectively by the incomparable sarcasm and wit of his writings. During his residence in London, he kept a journal of passing events, which is preserved in his correspondence with the celebrated Stella, (Mrs. Johnson,) whom he is supposed to have privately married. His political importance in England being extinguished on the accession of the new dynasty, he devoted himself assiduously to the duties of his charge; without, however, ceasing to concern himself with those measures that affected the interests of Ireland. Under the pseudonym of Drapier, he wrote a series of letters opposing a monopoly of the copper coinage of that country which the Government intended to

confer upon a person of the name of Wood, and raised such a storm of resistance to the scheme that it was abandoned by its projectors. His public spirit on this and subsequent occasions procured him unbounded popularity; and to the end of his life he was honoured by his countrymen as one of the greatest benefactors of Ireland. He had long been subject to fits of giddiness and deafness, which for some years before his death increased so much in severity as to put a stop to all literary exertion; and this affection ultimately assumed the form of mental disease. In 1741 his mind had so far decayed that he was placed under personal restraint; and in 1745 he died, after having been for two years in a state of speechless stupor.

The character of Swift has been variously estimated. By some he has been denounced as the most detestable of misanthropes, while others have claimed for him the character of a philanthropist who only displayed the vices and weaknesses of his species in order to benefit and improve them. The careful and discriminating appreciation of Dr. Johnson, which appears to be written in a spirit of impartiality, is characterized by his usual depth of observation and brilliance of diction. He neither brings into prominence the darker features of his conduct, nor attempts to explain them by the unphilosophical plea of latent insanity.

With Bunyan and Defoe in his own time, and more recently with Cobbett, Swift shares the distinction of being one of the masters of the difficult art of writing in a pure Anglo-Saxon idiom. As a satirist he has never been equalled in the prose of any language. His *Tale of a Tub* is an allegory written in support of the Church of England, and in ridicule of the Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and other dissenters; and he himself considered it the greatest effort of his genius. This is also the opinion of many competent critics; but it is to *Gulliver's Travels* that he owes his widest reputation. "Perhaps no work," says Sir Walter Scott, "ever exhibited such general attractions to all classes. It offered personal and political satire to the readers in high life, low and coarse incident to the vulgar, marvels to the romantic, wit to the young and lively, lessons of morality and

policy to the grave, and maxims of deep and bitter misanthropy to neglected age and disappointed ambition." The most poignant reflections upon human nature are to be found in the account of *Laputa* and the description of the *Yahoos*. *The Battle of the Books* was written in support of the views advocated by his patron Sir William Temple in the discussion upon ancient and modern learning. *An Argument against Abolishing Christianity*, is a characteristic specimen of grave irony directed against infidelity. The following extract from *Gulliver's Travels* affords a specimen of Swift's severity of ironical satire: —

THE ACADEMY OF LAGADO.

In the school of political projectors I was but ill entertained, the professors appearing in my judgment wholly out of their senses; which is a scene that never fails to make me melancholy. These unhappy people were proposing schemes for persuading monarchs to choose favourites upon the score of their wisdom, capacity, and virtue; of teaching ministers to consult the public good; of rewarding merit, great abilities, and eminent services; of instructing princes to know their true interest, by placing it on the same foundation with that of their people; of choosing for employments persons qualified to exercise them; with many other wild, impossible chimeras, that never entered before into the heart of man to conceive, and confirmed in me the old observation, that there is nothing so extravagant and irrational which some philosophers have not maintained for truth.

But, however, I shall so far do justice to this part of the academy, as to acknowledge that all of them were not so visionary. There was a most ingenious doctor, who seemed to be perfectly versed in the whole nature and system of government. This illustrious person had very usefully employed his studies in finding out effectual remedies for all diseases and corruptions to which the several kinds of public administration are subject by the vices or infirmities of those who govern, as well as by the licentiousness of those who are to obey. For instance, whereas all writers and reasoners have agreed that there is a strict universal resemblance between the natural and political body, can there be anything more evident than that the health of both must be preserved, and the diseases cured, by the same prescriptions? . . . . . This doctor therefore proposed, that upon the meeting of a senate, certain physicians should attend at the three first days of their sitting, and at the close of each day's debate feel the pulses of every senator; after which, having maturely considered and consulted upon the nature of the several maladies, and the methods of cure, they should on the fourth day return to the senate-house, attended by their apothecaries stored with proper medicines; and, before the members sat, administer to each of them, lenitives, aperitives, abstersives, corrosives, restringents, palliatives, laxatives, cephalalgics, icterics, apophlegmatics, acoustics, as their several cases required;

and, according as these medicines should operate, repeat, alter, or omit them at the next meeting.

This project could not be of any great expense to the public, and might, in my poor opinion, be of much use for the despatch of business in those countries where senates have any share in the legislative power; beget unanimity, shorten debates, open a few mouths which are now closed, and close many more which are now open; curb the petulancy of the young, and correct the positiveness of the old; rouse the stupid, and damp the pert.

Again, because it is a general complaint that the favourites of princes are troubled with short and weak memories, the same doctor proposed, that whoever attended a first minister, after having told his business with the utmost brevity, and in the plainest words, should, at his departure, give the said minister a tweak by the nose, or a kick in the belly, or tread on his corns, or lug him thrice by both ears, or run a pin into his body, or pinch his arms black and blue, to prevent forgetfulness; and at every levee day repeat the same operation, until the business were done or absolutely refused.

He likewise directed that every senator in the great council of a nation, after he had delivered his opinion, and argued in the defence of it, should be obliged to give his vote directly contrary; because if that were done, the result would infallibly terminate in the good of the public.

## NOVELISTS.

Samuel Richardson (1689–1761), a bookseller in London, was the author of a series of works which mark an epoch in the literature of fiction. *Pamela*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*, novels founded on the delineation of real character and the incidents of contemporary life, were for many years after their appearance excessively popular, both in England and on the Continent; and although now comparatively neglected, they still keep their place among our classics, on account of their skill in portraying passion and their power over the feelings of the reader. The professed aim of Richardson as a novelist was identical with that of the British Essayists—the inculcation and promotion of virtue. *Pamela* was published in 1740, and *Sir Charles Grandison*, his last novel, in 1753.

Henry Fielding (1707–1754) had a genius of greater versatility and more commanding character. He has been termed the Prince of Novelists; and his principal works, *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*, are of that class whose reputation cannot be impaired by

time. They have the humour of Cervantes, the wit of Butler, and the penetrating observation without the misanthropy of Swift. He belonged to a noble family, being descended from an Earl of Denbigh; studied law, and endeavoured to support himself by writing for the stage; squandered a fortune brought him by his wife, and was afterward appointed one of the justices of Middlesex. The freedom of life in which he unfortunately indulged broke down his constitution, and he died at Lisbon, to which he had gone in search of health. The principal of his other works are *Amelia* and the *History of Jonathan Wild;* and he wrote numerous burlesques and farces.

Tobias Smollett was born in Dumbartonshire in 1721. He was bred a surgeon, accompanied the unfortunate expedition to Carthagena in that capacity, and thus acquired that knowledge of nautical life and character to which literature is indebted for some of his most spirited and characteristic sketches. He abandoned the medical profession for a literary career, and fixed his residence in London, where he acted a prominent part in the world of letters and politics. He died at Leghorn in 1771. Contemporary with Fielding, and possessing many kindred traits of his genius, he naturally falls into comparison with that master of the art of fiction. Smollett wrote with great ease and rapidity, and his works do not present the carefulness and finish of Fielding's, who surpasses him in purity of style and elegance of composition, as well as refinement and delicacy in the delineation of character. His satire is also less philosophical than that of Fielding, which attacks principles rather than individuals, while Smollett is frequently reckless and personal. Neither does he manifest the skill of Fielding in the conduct and development of a plot; but he possesses a more poetical imagination, and displays a greater variety of inventive resources. The originality, truthfulness, and raciness of *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle*, have enabled them, like their French model, *Gil Blas*, to survive the fluctuations of taste and criticism. Of his other prose works the principal are, *Humphrey Clinker*, *Sir Lancelot Greaves*, *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, besides a continuation of the *History of England* by

Hume, and a translation of *Don Quixote*. His *Ode to Independence* and *Leven Water* have preserved his memory as a poet.

### MINOR AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITERS.

Lord Shaftesbury (1671–1713) was the grandson of the famous Ashley of the Cabal. He inherited no small portion of the talent of his progenitor, who, taking charge of him when a boy, placed him under the care of the philosopher Locke. His various essays in moral and metaphysical speculation were published under the name of the *Characteristics;* and although they propound no definite system of ethics, they contain the rudiments of that philosophy which refers the perception of vice and virtue to what has been termed "the moral sense." The style of Shaftesbury is much admired for its melody and elegance. The political career of Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1672–1751), is well known to the reader of English history, and not less so to the literary student as the "guide, philosopher, and friend," of Pope. *The Idea of a Patriot King*, and *Letters on the Study and Use of History*, are his principal works. A living critic considers the merit of his style to consist in a happy medium between that of the scholar and the man of society, and in having thus furnished a good model for popular writing.

Dr. John Arbuthnot, also the intimate friend of Pope and Swift, shared with them the production of several pieces; one of the most celebrated of which, the satirical *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*, is believed to have been almost entirely, if not altogether, written by himself. In that work, and in his *History of John Bull*, a political satire, he displays an originality and power of wit and humour that prove him to have been no unworthy associate of the redoubtable Dean. He was as much esteemed for the virtue and amiability of his character as for his literary talent.

George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne (1684–1753), was one of the most original thinkers, and, within the sphere in which he exercised his fine intellect, one of the most distinguished writers of this period. As the author of the *Theory of Vision*, and of

those discourses in which he propounds his celebrated philosophy of Idealism, directed against the doctrine of Materialism, his name is intimately associated both with science and metaphysics.

Dr. Samuel Clarke (1675–1729) owes his reputation as a theologian to his essay on the *Being and Attributes of God*, founded on the argument *à priori;* and as a metaphysician to his theory of the eternal fitness of things as the standard of moral rectitude.

Bishop Butler's *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, is well known to be one of the most powerful treatises in support of the Christian faith, as well as one of the best efforts of exact reasoning, that has ever been produced.

# MODERN ENGLISH.

(Fourth Period—1750–1800.)

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

French school superseded by Cowper and others—Johnson's prose—Burke—The three great historians—Revival of the Periodical Essay—The "Idler" the last of the series.

After the school of Dryden and Pope had ceased to be represented by its excellences, a new direction was given to the public taste by the writings of Cowper, by the critical and editorial labours of the Wartons, the publication of Percy's *Reliques of English Poetry*, the passionate lyrics of Burns, and the novel field opened up by Crabbe. In Motherwell's preface to his valuable collection,[1] the character of Percy's *Reliques* is thus estimated:—"Important as the additions are which said work has made to our knowledge of ancient poesy, customs, and manners, the influence which it has had on the literature of the present day, and the change it has been the main instrument of producing on the character of its poetry, are of the most obvious and beneficial description." A collateral, though by no means a similar, change in the character of English prose was developed, or rather perfected, by the powerful pen of Johnson. The strongly idiomatic and simple structure of Swift and the easy style of Addison now gave way to one that was more complex in arrangement, more sonorous, dignified, and energetic in its measure. It was in some respects a return to the Latinized style and vocabulary of the Elizabethan models, Johnson himself being said to have formed his style upon that of the famous author of the *Religio Medici*.

[1] Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern. 1827.

It is not uncalled for to remark the coincidence of this retrospective influence upon prose with the reawakened enthusiasm for the older poets that was to reach its climax in the following century. Within the sphere of forensic and senatorial eloquence the brilliant oratory and powerful essays of the renowned Edmund Burke have perhaps exercised an influence equal to that of Johnson's writings upon English literature. One of the most prominent features of this period is the brilliant group of historians, comprising the names of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon; the first writers who bestowed upon history the dignity of the epic.

By the publication of the *Rambler* in 1750, Dr. Johnson revived the Periodical Essay, which had ceased to exist since the time of Addison; and his example was followed by Dr. Hawkesworth in the publication of the *Adventurer* in 1752. To this paper Dr. Johnson and Joseph Warton also contributed, but most of it was from the pen of its editor. The *World* (1753) by Edward Moore, the *Connoisseur* (1754) by George Colman and Bonnel Thornton, and the *Idler* (1758) by Dr. Johnson, complete the series of periodicals formed upon the model, and professing the aim of the founders of the British Essay.

## CHAPTER II.

### AUTHORS AND WORKS.

Cowper—Goldsmith—Chatterton—Burns—Crabbe—Minor poets—The drama.

#### WILLIAM COWPER—1731-1800.

The father of Cowper was rector of Great Berkhampstead in Hertfordshire, and at that place the poet was born. From Westminster School, where he spent eight years, he went to the study of the law, first under a solicitor, and next at the Middle Temple, where he remained for about eleven years. The patronage of his cousin procured him the appointment of Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords, but on being made aware that it was necessary to appear at the bar of the House in order to undergo an examination, he became morbidly nervous—the thought of a public exhibition being, to use his own expression, "mortal poison." After enduring the greatest mental agony for several weeks previous to the appointed day, he actually attempted to commit suicide in order to escape the ordeal. He became insane shortly after resigning the office, and remained in that state for eighteen months. On his recovery he removed to Huntingdonshire, where he became a boarder in the house of the Rev. Mr. Unwin; after whose death he removed to Olney in Buckinghamshire, in order to enjoy the society and ministrations of the celebrated John Newton. He was accompanied by Mrs. Unwin, to whose devoted friendship he was afterwards so much indebted when attacked by his constitutional malady. His insanity, which always assumed the form of religious despondency, came upon him while he was engaged with his pastor in writing the well known *Olney Hymns*. For four years he remained in this melancholy condition; and it was during the interval between the second and third attack of this dreadful malady that he produced most of his poems. It is a remarkable circumstance that Cowper was about fifty years of age before he wrote any of the pieces upon which his fame depends. His first

volume, containing the *Progress of Error*, besides the moral essays or satires entitled *Truth*, *Table Talk*, &c., was published in 1782. In 1785 he published his principal poem, *The Task*, written at the suggestion of Lady Austen, who had come to reside at Olney, and whose cheerful and intellectual society exercised a most beneficial effect upon his health and spirits; and in that happy frame of mind he composed *John Gilpin*, after she had amused him one evening with the relation of that hero's adventures. In 1794 he was again afflicted with his constitutional malady; and to add to his misery, his tried and affectionate friend Mrs. Unwin died in 1796. He lingered three years longer in a state of despondency which it is painful to contemplate, and died in 1800.

Cowper united to a genius which has rendered him one of the most original of the British poets, a spirit of fervent devotion and an intense desire to render mankind wiser and better by his writings. In him the poet was subordinate to the moral teacher; his inspiration sprung from a sense of duty rather than from the love of fame; and in the preface to one of his earlier poems, he expressly treats poetical embellishment as unworthy of the consideration of a serious reader. His imagery is therefore never luxuriant, and we feel that it is never equal to his resources. His prominent characteristics, as one of the most influential precursors of a new school of poetry, consist in deriving his themes from the ordinary duties and routine of domestic life, his descriptions of familiar rural scenery, and his rejection of conventional poetical diction by the adoption of that homely phraseology which he employs with equal force and felicity. His pictures of natural phenomena naturally suggest a comparison with the Poet of the Seasons; but Thomson's florid and amplified style stands in direct contrast to the terseness and severity of Cowper's muse.

FROM "TABLE-TALK."

THE THREE LIGHTS OF POETRY.

Ages elapsed ere Homer's lamp appeared,
And ages ere the Mantuan Swan was heard:
To carry nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, asked ages more.

Thus genius rose and set at ordered times,
And shot a day-spring into distant climes,
Ennobling every region that he chose:
He sank in Greece, in Italy he rose;
And, tedious years of Gothic darkness past,
Emerged all splendour in our isle at last.
Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

### DESCRIPTION OF CHATHAM.

In him Demosthenes was heard again;
Liberty taught him her Athenian strain;
She clothed him with authority and awe,
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.
His speech, his form, his action, full of grace,
And all his country beaming in his face,
He stood, as some inimitable hand
Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.
No sycophant or slave that dared oppose
Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose;
And every venal stickler for the yoke
Felt himself crushed at the first word he spoke.

## FROM "RETIREMENT."

### AN EMBLEM OF LIFE.

Opening the map of God's extensive plan,
We find a little isle, this life of man;
Eternity's unknown expanse appears
Circling around and limiting his years.
The busy race examine and explore
Each creek and cavern of the dangerous shore:
With care collect what in their eyes excels;
Some, shining pebbles; and some, weeds and shells:
Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,
And happiest he that groans beneath his weight.
The waves o'ertake them in their serious play,
And every hour sweeps multitudes away.
They shriek and sink, survivors start and weep,
Pursue their sport, and follow to the deep.
A few forsake the throng; with lifted eyes
Ask wealth of Heaven, and gain a real prize,
Truth, wisdom, grace, and peace like that above,
Sealed with His signet whom they serve and love:

Scorned by the rest, with patient hope they wait
A kind release from their imperfect state,
And unregretted are soon snatched away
From scenes of sorrow into glorious day.

## FROM "THE TASK."

### A RURAL LANDSCAPE.

How oft upon yon eminence our pace
Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have borne
The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,
While admiration, feeding at the eye,
And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.
Thence with what pleasure have we just discerned
The distant plough slow moving, and beside
His labouring team, that swerved not from the track,
The sturdy swain diminished to a boy!
Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain
Of spacious meads, with cattle sprinkled o'er,
Conducts the eye along his sinuous course,
Delighted. There, fast-rooted in their bank,
Stand, never overlooked, our favourite elms,
That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;
While far beyond, and overthwart the stream,
That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale,
The sloping land recedes into the clouds;
Displaying on its varied side the grace
Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tower,
Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
Just undulates upon the listening ear,
Groves, heaths, and smoking villages, remote.
Scenes must be beautiful which, daily viewed,
Please daily, and whose novelty survives
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years—
Praise justly due to those that I describe.

### EVENING INVOKED.

Come, Evening, once again, season of peace!
Return, sweet Evening, and continue long!
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron step slow moving, while the Night
Treads on thy sweeping train; one hand employed
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charged for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day:

Not sumptuously adorned, nor needing aid,
Like homely-featured Night, of clustering gems:
A star or two, just twinkling on thy brow,
Suffices thee; save that the moon is thine
No less than hers, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendentless, but of an ampler round.

## LINES ON THE RECEIPT OF HIS MOTHER'S PICTURE.

O that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smiles I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else, how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it!) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidst me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long.
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream that thou art she.
My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unseen, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was. Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting sound shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of a quick return.

What ardently I wished, I long believed,
And disappointed still, was still deceived;
By disappointment every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learned at last submission to my lot;
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt, our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapt
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capt,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short lived possession! but the record fair
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed:
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;—
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile);
Could those few pleasant hours again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.

But no;—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed)
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe and brighter seasons smile;
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails so swift, hast reached the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;"
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored at thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed—
Me howling winds drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ript, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
But, oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he!—
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents passed into the skies.
And now, farewell—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And, while the wings of fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

## OLIVER GOLDSMITH—1728–1774.

Oliver Goldsmith was born at Pallas in the county of Longford, and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Arts. He studied medicine first at Edin-

burgh, and afterwards at Leyden; from which latter place he set out on foot to make the tour of Europe, having both at Leyden and Edinburgh indulged in the practice of gambling and other extravagances until he found himself penniless. In his travels, he is believed to have subsisted chiefly by playing on the flute; and in this fashion he traversed parts of Flanders, France, Germany, and Switzerland, where he composed part of his poem, *The Traveller*. He also entered Italy, and remained six months at Padua. On his return to England this fine genius was condemned to literary servitude of a most humiliating kind. When Johnson was struggling with indigence and obscurity, he had compiled a catalogue for Osborn the bookseller, at days' wages; and some twenty years later, we find the publisher of *The Monthy Review* commanding the undivided services of Goldsmith for board and lodging with a small salary. In 1764 the appearance of *The Traveller* at once established his fame as a poet; which was followed in 1770 by the equally celebrated *Deserted Village*. His reputation as a prose writer at length procured him large sums for his writings: but his incurable improvidence always kept him poor and in debt; and the distress of mind occasioned by his pecuniary difficulties aggravated the disease of which he died at the age of forty-five. A monument was erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey, beside the tomb of Gay.

The versification of Goldsmith has all the ease and melody of Pope. "He is refined without false delicacy, and correct without insipidity." Simple and chaste in expression, his poetry has those charms of truth, pathos, and placid earnestness, which at once secured for it a recognition that has never been, and is not likely soon to be, impaired. There is perhaps no poem of the same length as *The Deserted Village* so effectually imprinted on the memory of every class of readers. As a novelist *The Vicar of Wakefield* has rendered him no less celebrated; and his comedies of *The Good-Natured Man* and *She Stoops to Conquer*, hold an eminent place in the British drama. *The Citizen of the World* consists of a series of admirable essays, written in the epistolary form.

## FROM "THE TRAVELLER."

### FRANCE.

Gay sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please!
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply, though my harsh touch, faltering still,
But mocked all tune, and marred the dancer's skill,
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance forgetful of the noon-tide hour.
Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze;
And the gay grandsire, skilled in gestic lore,
Has frisked beneath the burden of threescore.
So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away:
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here.
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land:
From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise;
They please, are pleased; they give to get esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

## FROM "THE DESERTED VILLAGE."

### DESCRIPTION OF AUBURN.

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain;
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's ling'ring blooms delayed.
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please!
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm!
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighb'ring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whisp'ring lovers made!

How often have I blest the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree;
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round.—
Sweet was the sound, when, oft at ev'ning's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below:
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whisp'ring wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.

### THE VILLAGE PREACHER.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a-year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train—
He chid their wand'rings, but relieved their pain:
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away—
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And even his failings leaned to virtue's side:
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt her new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The rev'rend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last falt'ring accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed with endearing wile.
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest:
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

### THE VILLAGE SCHOOLMASTER.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school:
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew.
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning's face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned:
Yet he was kind; or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault:

The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge:
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For even though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame: the very spot
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.

### THE VILLAGE ALE-HOUSE.

Near yonder thorn that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place;
The white-washed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest, contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.
Vain, transitory splendour! could not all
Reprieve the tott'ring mansion from its fall!
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his pond'rous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

### THOMAS CHATTERTON—1752-1770.

Nothing that is recorded of Pope or Cowley is nearly so astonishing as the precocity of Chatterton. While a mere child he occupied himself with studying and copying old illuminated manuscripts; and before he had emerged from boyhood, he produced a series of poems which he ascribed to the fictitious Thomas Rowley, a monk of the fifteenth century, and which were on their first appearance pronounced to be genuine by several of the most eminent critics. These poems he alleged he had found in the muniment room of the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, in Bristol, his native town; and their intrinsic poetical merit has been highly acknowledged. He also invented pedigrees, narratives of public events, and biographies of painters of the city of Bristol, of the discovery of which he gave the same account as of the poems. Some of these fabrications he submitted to Horace Walpole, whom he knew to be a zealous antiquarian, and Walpole submitted them to the inspection of his friend Gray, the poet, who pronounced them forgeries. It is no slight proof of the learning and critical skill of Gray, that these imitations had deceived Warton, the erudite and accomplished historian of English poetry.

The fate of this enthusiastic and wonderful boy is unspeakably touching. He was born three months after the death of his father, a schoolmaster in Bristol; was educated at a charity school; and at the age of fifteen was apprenticed to a solicitor in Bristol. At the early age of seventeen he left his native town for London, where he felt confident that his talents would soon raise him to greatness. He engaged in politics, in the belief that his services would secure him the support and patronage of the Government; but neither by this means nor by his labours in various literary departments, was he able to keep himself from starvation. The sudden blasting of those ardent hopes with which he had repaired to the metropolis reduced him to unutterable despair, and he died by his own hand before he had attained his eighteenth year.

## ROBERT BURNS—1759–1796.

History has recorded but one such tribute to true greatness as was furnished on the 25th of January 1859, when the centenary of the birth of Robert Burns, THE PLOUGHMAN, was celebrated in every quarter of the globe. And yet it was not a tribute to mere intellect: it was a tribute of affection to the nobility, manhood, and benevolence of the poet's character, as well as of admiration to the splendour of his genius: it was a spontaneous and irrepressible response to his sympathy with the good, the beautiful, and the true,—the enthusiastic homage of the heart to the poet of nature, of freedom, and of humanity; to him who abhorred injustice without despairing of universal brotherhood; whose blood boiled at the name of freedom's hero, till it overflowed in the noblest of hymns; and whose love of nature has immortalized and rendered vocal the hills and the dales, the streams and the woods, of his native land. In the vision wherein he was crowned with the sacred holly by the Genius of the district that has been rendered classic by his name, can his rapt fancy have anticipated the period that was to hail him as the chosen bard of every clime?

Burns was the son of a cotter, that is, a farmer of the humblest class, in Ayrshire, where he was born in the year 1759. The straitened circumstances of his father rendered it necessary that his children should contribute to their own support at a very early age; and Burns has himself informed us that "the cheerless gloom of the hermit with the unceasing moil of the galley-slave" brought him to his sixteenth year. After his father's death he resolved to try his fortune in the West Indies, having been unsuccessful in a farming speculation on which he had entered along with his brother Gilbert. The career as well as the character of Burns is amply illustrated by his poetry; and the song of *The gloomy night is gathering fast* marks that critical point of his life when he bade an exile's adieu to the bonny banks of Ayr. He had in the meantime published a collection of his poems; and the approbation bestowed on them by the literary world, as well as the general public, induced him to relinquish his intention of going

abroad. He repaired to Edinburgh, where he was received into the society of the learned and the fashionable, who were as much astonished by the brilliant and fluent conversation of the unlettered ploughman as they had been by his sudden apparition as a poet of the first rank. The profits of a second edition of his poems enabled him to rent the farm of Ellisland in Dumfries-shire; but this he also abandoned to devote himself wholly to the duties of an appointment he had obtained as an exciseman. Having by some unguarded expressions on the French Revolution incurred the displeasure of Government, his hopes of promotion were blasted; all the exertions of his friends were necessary to prevent his dismissal; and the bitterness of his feelings was aggravated by declining health. Tortured by anxiety and harassed by poverty, his brief though brilliant career was terminated in 1796. He died at Dumfries in the thirty-seventh year of his age.

Burns is admittedly one of the greatest of modern lyrists. He is pre-eminently the poet of emotion; and it may be questioned if he has ever been equalled as a writer of songs. *The Twa Dogs*, *Tam o' Shanter*, and *Hallowe'en*, are among the best specimens of his humorous and descriptive poetry; and in serious composition, *The Cotter's Saturday Night* is a beautiful picture of rustic home life. "The saint, the husband, and the father," is a portrait of the parent of whom he was so justly proud; and in all the poems just named his personal history is intimately blended with the descriptions of character, manners, and scenery. We believe this notice of Scotland's greatest poet will be most appropriately concluded by his biographer Dr. Currie's highly interesting account of his personal appearance and deportment:—"Burns was nearly five feet ten inches in height, and of a form that indicated agility as well as strength. His well-raised forehead, shaded with black curling hair, indicated extensive capacity. His eyes were large, dark, full of ardour and intelligence. His face was well formed; and his countenance uncommonly interesting and expressive. His mode of dressing, which was often slovenly, and a certain fulness and bend in his shoulders, characteristic of his original profession, disguised in some degree the natural symmetry and elegance of

his form. The external appearance of Burns was most strikingly indicative of the character of his mind. On a first view, his physiognomy had a certain air of coarseness, mingled, however, with an expression of deep penetration and of calm thoughtfulness approaching to melancholy. There appeared in his first manner and address perfect ease and self-possession, but a stern and almost supercilious elevation, not indeed incompatible with openness and affability, which, however, bespoke a mind conscious of superior talents. Strangers that supposed themselves approaching an Ayrshire peasant who could make rhymes, and to whom their notice was an honour, found themselves speedily overawed by the presence of a man who bore himself with dignity, and who possessed a singular power of correcting forwardness and of repelling intrusion. But though jealous of the respect due to himself, Burns never enforced it where he saw it was willingly paid; and though inaccessible to the approaches of pride, he was open to every advance of kindness and of benevolence. His dark and haughty countenance easily relaxed into a look of good-will, of pity, or of tenderness; and, as the various emotions succeeded each other in his mind, assumed with equal ease the expression of the broadest humour, of the most extravagant mirth, or of the most sublime emotion."

### THE MOUNTAIN DAISY.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun[1] crush amang[2] the stoure[3]
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neibor[4] sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet![5]
Wi' speckl'd breast,
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

[1] "Maun," must. [2] "Amang," among. [3] "Stoure," dust.
[4] "Neibor," neighbour. [5] "Weet," wet.

Cauld[1] blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted[2] forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's[3] maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield[4]
O' clod or stane,[5]
Adorns the histie[6] stibble-field,[7]
Unseen, alane.[8]

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie[9] bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'ry's brink,
Till wrench'd of every stay but Heav'n,
He, ruin'd, sink!

1 "Cauld," cold.
2 "Glinted," peeped.
3 "Wa's," walls.
4 "Bield," shelter.
5 "Stane," stone.
6 "Histie," barren.
7 "Stibble-field," stubble-field.
8 "Alane," alone.
9 "Snawie," snow-white.

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom.

## TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
Oh, Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace—
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar
Twin'd am'rous round the raptur'd scene;
The flow'rs sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray—
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

## FROM "THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT."

November chill blaws[1] loud wi' angry sugh ;[2]
The short'ning winter-day is near a close ;
The miry beasts retreating frae[3] the pleugh ;[4]
The black'ning trains o' craws[5] to their repose :
The toil-worn cotter frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward[6] bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree ;
Th' expectant wee things, toddlin',[7] stacher[8] through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin'[9] noise and glee.
His wee bit ingle,[10] blinkin'[11] bonnily,
His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labour and his toil.

Belyve,[12] the elder bairns[13] come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun' :[14]
Some ca'[15] the pleugh, some herd, some tentie[16] rin[17]
A cannie[18] errand to a neibor[19] town :
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps, to show a braw[20] new gown,
Or deposite her sair-won[21] penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers :[22]
The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet.
Each tells the unco's[23] that he sees or hears ;
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years ;
Anticipation forward points the view.

[1] "Blaws," blows.
[2] "Sugh," the rushing sound of wind.
[3] "Frae," from.
[4] "Pleugh," plough.
[5] "Craws," crows.
[6] "Hameward," homeward.
[7] "Toddlin'," tottering.
[8] "Stacher," stagger.
[9] "Flichterin'," fluttering.
[10] "Ingle," fire.
[11] "Blinkin'," shining by fits.
[12] "Belyve," by-and-by.
[13] "Bairns," children.
[14] "Roun'," around.
[15] "Ca'," drive.
[16] "Tentie," heedful.
[17] "Rin," run.
[18] "Cannie," slight.
[19] "Neibor," neighbouring.
[20] "Braw," gay.
[21] "Sair-won," hard-won.
[22] "Spiers," asks.
[23] "Unco's," news.

The mother, wi' her needle and her shears,
Gars[1] auld[2] claes[3] look amaist[4] as weel's the new ;—
The father mixes a'[5] wi' admonition due.
* * * *
The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide ;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big Ha'-Bible,[6] ance[7] his father's pride :
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets[8] wearin' thin and bare ;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales[9] a portion with judicious care ;
And "Let us worship GOD!" he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise ;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim :
Perhaps Dundee's wild warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name,
Or noble Elgin beets[10] the heaven-ward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame ;
The tickled ear no heart-felt raptures raise ;
Nae[11] unison hae[12] they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page—
How Abram was the friend of God on high ;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny ;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire ;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry ;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire ;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme—
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;
How HE, who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his head :
How his first followers and servants sped,
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land :
How he, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand ;
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

[1] "Gars," makes.
[2] "Auld," old.
[3] "Claes," clothes.
[4] "Amaist," almost.
[5] "A'," all.
[6] "Ha'-Bible," family Bible.
[7] "Ance," once.
[8] "Lyart haffets," gray-haired temples.
[9] "Wales," chooses.
[10] "Beets," increases.
[11] "Nae," no.
[12] "Hae," have.

Then kneeling down to HEAVEN'S ETERNAL KING,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays;
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days;
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

FROM "THE VISION,"

*In which the young poet is thus addressed by Coila, the tutelar genius of his native district.*

"With future hope, I oft would gaze,
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely caroll'd, chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes,
Fired at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or when the North his fleecy store
Drove through the sky,
I saw grim Nature's visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

Or when the deep green-mantled earth
Warm cherish'd ev'ry flow'ret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In ev'ry grove,
I saw thee eye the general mirth
With boundless love.

When ripen'd fields and azure skies
Called forth the reapers' rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their evening joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise
In pensive walk.

* * * * *

To give my counsels all in one—
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan;
Preserve the dignity of man
With soul erect;
And trust, the universal plan
Will all protect.

And wear thou this"—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head:
The polish'd leaves, and berries red,
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.

## FAREWELL TO NANCY.

Ae[1] fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething[2] could resist my Nancy:
But to see her was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never lov'd sae[3] kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel,[4] thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka[5] joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas! for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

## THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.

Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go;
Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
To the birks[6] of Aberfeldy?

Now simmer[7] blinks[8] on flow'ry braes,
And o'er the crystal streamlet plays;
Come, let us spend the lightsome days
In the birks of Aberfeldy.

[1] "Ae," one. [2] "Naething," nothing. [3] "Sae," so. [4] "Weel," well.
[5] "Ilka," each. [6] "Birks," birches. [7] "Simmer," summer. [8] "Blinks," shines.

The little birdies blythely sing,
While o'er their heads the hazels hing,[1]
Or lightly flit on wanton wing
In the birks of Aberfeldy.

The braes ascend, like lofty wa's,
The foamy stream deep-roaring fa's,[2]
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws,[3]
The birks of Aberfeldy.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flow'rs,
White o'er the linns[4] the burnie[5] pours,
And rising, weets wi' misty showers
The birks of Aberfeldy.

Let Fortune's gifts at random flee,
They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,
Supremely blest wi' love and thee
In the birks of Aberfeldy.

### GEORGE CRABBE—1754-1832.

"The Poet of the Poor," as this vigorous and original writer has been termed, was himself of humble origin, and was born in the village of Aldborough in Suffolk. Discouraged in the attempt to establish himself as a surgeon and apothecary in the place of his birth, he repaired to London, where he ineffectually endeavoured to obtain employment from the booksellers, and at the end of some months found himself on the verge of beggary. Having in vain solicited assistance from Lord North, then Prime Minister, and afterwards from Lord Thurlow, in a lucky moment he thought of bringing his circumstances under the notice of the celebrated Edmund Burke. The penetrating eye of that eminent man at once discerned the merit of his poems. He generously extended to him the help of which he stood in need, assisted him with his counsel, and it was under his auspices that *The Library* and *The Village* were presented to the world, the first in 1781, and the latter two years afterwards. Having now taken orders in the Church of England, he was successively appointed to various livings; and in the zealous discharge of his clerical duties he withdrew from public notice till 1807, when he published *The*

[1] "Hing," hang. [2] "Fa's," falls. [3] "Shaws," foliage.
[4] "Linns," waterfalls. [5] "Burnie," rivulet.

*Parish Register*, and *The Borough* followed in 1810. His reappearance was hailed with congratulations by the literary world. He emerged from the retirement in which he had so long buried himself, and formed the acquaintanceship of the most famous of his poetical contemporaries, by whom he was as much beloved and esteemed for the amiable simplicity and moral worth of his character as he was admired for his genius. His last work, *The Tales of the Hall*, was published in 1819. He died at Trowbridge, of which he was rector, in 1832, in his seventy-eighth year.

The life of Crabbe unites two periods. His poetry is distinguished for minute delineation of character, and great power and fidelity of description, both of such natural scenery as falls within his range, and of the workings of passion, particularly those of a darker shade. For strength and originality he has been compared to Cowper, and for diction and versification to Goldsmith; but his poems have neither the pleasing features of Goldsmith, nor the exalting influence of Cowper. Crabbe was well described by Byron as "Nature's sternest painter."

### ISAAC ASHFORD.

Next to these ladies, but in nought allied,
A noble peasant, Isaac Ashford, died.
Noble he was, contemning all things mean,
His truth unquestioned, and his soul serene.
Of no man's presence Isaac felt afraid,
At no man's question Isaac looked dismayed:
Shame knew him not, he dreaded no disgrace;
Truth, simple truth, was written in his face.
Yet while the serious thought his soul approved,
Cheerful he seemed and gentleness he loved:
To bliss domestic he his heart resigned,
And, with the firmest, had the fondest mind.
Were others joyful, he looked smiling on,
And gave allowance where he needed none:
Good he refused with future ill to buy,
Nor knew a joy that caused reflection's sigh.
A friend to virtue, his unclouded breast
No envy stung, no jealousy distressed;—
(Bane of the poor! it wounds their weaker mind
To miss one favour which their neighbours find:)

Yet far was he from stoic pride removed;
He felt humanely, and he warmly loved:
I marked his action when his infant died,
And his old neighbour for offence was tried;
The still tears, stealing down that furrowed cheek,
Spoke pity plainer than the tongue can speak.
If pride was his, 'twas not their vulgar pride,
Who, in their base contempt, the great deride;
Nor pride in learning, though my clerk agreed,
If Fate should call him, Ashford might succeed;
Nor pride in rustic skill, although we knew
None his superior, and his equals few:
But if that spirit in his soul had place,
It was the jealous pride that shuns disgrace;
A pride in honest fame, by virtue gained,
In sturdy boys to virtuous labours trained;
Pride in the power that guards his country's coast,
And all that Englishmen enjoy and boast;
Pride in a life that slander's tongue defied—
In fact, a noble passion, misnamed pride.
* * * *
I feel his absence in the hour of prayer,
And view his seat, and sigh for Isaac there;
I see no more those white locks, thinly spread
Round the bald polish of that honoured head;
No more that awful glance on playful wight,
Compelled to kneel and tremble at the sight,
To fold his fingers all in dread the while,
Till Master Ashford softened to a smile;
No more that meek and suppliant look in prayer,
Nor the pure faith (to give it force) are there;—
But he is blessed, and I lament no more
A wise good man, contented to be poor.

## MINOR POETS.

Among the poets who retain a more or less conspicuous place in English literature, and whom we have only space to notice collectively, is Dr. Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore, who published in 1765 his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, consisting of a collection of old songs and ballads, together with imitations by himself of the ballad style. The appearance of these poems produced an immediate and extensive influence upon both readers and writers of poetry, and is admitted to have materially modified its character in the subsequent period. Dr.

James Beattie, the author of an *Essay on Truth*, written in opposition to the sceptical doctrines of Hume, is better known by *The Minstrel*, a didactic poem in the Spenserian stanza, and with a considerable tinge of Spenserian style and sentiment, intended to trace the progress of a poetical genius. The first and second parts of this poem, which was never completed, were severally published in 1771 and 1774. *The Shipwreck* possesses the double merit of being a work of genius and the narrative of an actor in the dreadful phenomena so correctly and graphically described. William Falconer, the author, was second mate in the merchant-ship Britannia, which was shipwrecked off Cape Colonna. The genius of Michael Bruce, who was cut off at the early age of twenty-one, is sufficiently vindicated by his short piece entitled *The Elegy*, in which he so pathetically describes the certain approach of premature dissolution. That most beautiful of lyrics, the *Ode to the Cuckoo*, has upon reasonable evidence been claimed for Bruce, although it was published by his editor, John Logan, as his own. Logan was a minister of the Church of Scotland, and his fame as the author of the ode procured him a visit from Burke, when that celebrated orator was in Edinburgh. The satires of Charles Churchill, pointed by personal animosity and political rancour, were excessively popular in their day; but his genius was misapplied, and his noisy and bitter tirades are now forgotten. One of his most characteristic pieces is a ludicrous satire on the Scotch nation, entitled *The Prophecy of Famine.* The *Botanic Garden* of Dr. Erasmus Darwin, like the *Purple Island* of Fletcher, is constructed upon the vicious principle of expounding science through the medium of poetry. Musical versification, play of fancy, and individual passages both beautiful and effective, have not been able to redeem the writings of Darwin from the neglect that necessarily follows a perversion of the purposes of the poetical art. Thomas Warton (1728–1790), Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, is better known by his *History of English Poetry* than by his own poetical productions, although some of his sonnets have been considered the finest in the language. His editorial labours and critical disquisitions upon Chaucer,

Spenser, and others, were mainly instrumental in reviving the national taste for the sterling beauties of the elder poets. His brother Joseph, who was scarcely his inferior as a poet, wrote an *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, in which he started a critical theory that has been very widely discussed. In 1760 JAMES MACPHERSON, a native of Inverness-shire, published a volume entitled *Fragments of Ancient Poetry translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language*, the first of that series of compositions known by the name of the Ossianic Poems. It was followed in 1762 by *Fingal*, an epic poem, and afterwards by *Temora;* and they were all alleged by Macpherson to be translations he had made from ancient Gaelic manuscripts, the poems of a Highland bard of the third century called Ossian. Amongst the first who pronounced them to be spurious and the composition of their pretended translator, was Dr. Samuel Johnson, who challenged Macpherson to produce the manuscript of any Erse poem of greater antiquity than the sixteenth century; and a fierce controversy was carried on upon the question during Macpherson's lifetime and after his death. These poems are now universally admitted to be forgeries; but there are various opinions as to their literary merit.

## THE DRAMA.

The reputation of the Drama during this period was well sustained by the comedies of GOLDSMITH, which have been already mentioned; and still better by those of RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, the celebrated orator and wit, whose *Critic*, *Rivals*, and *School for Scandal*, hold the first place as specimens of genteel comedy. The same school is excellently represented by the two COLMANS, father and son, CUMBERLAND, MURPHY, and HOLCROFT. *The Road to Ruin* by the latter, and *The Heir-at-Law* of George Colman the younger, are standard pieces both for the stage and the study. MRS. INCHBALD is also well known both as a dramatical critic and a successful writer of plays and farces. The well known tragedy of *Douglas* by the REV. JOHN HOME is the only specimen of the period in that department that may be said to have survived.

## CHAPTER III.

### BALLAD POETRY.

THE term *Ballad* is, in its more definite signification, applied to narrative composition, although it is usually interchanged with the more generic name of *Song;* which, again, is in its more exclusive sense assigned to "songs of sentiment, expression, or even description." The word *Ballad* is derived from the Italian *ballare*, to dance, and originally signified a song sung in dancing. Our popular ballad poetry has been transmitted orally from generation to generation for an immemorial period; and it has been described by one of its most devoted editors as "a series of compositions, terse and unlaboured, but supplying in their details satisfactory and striking illustrations of the manners, habits, feelings, superstitions, and prejudices, of days deep hidden in the gloom of hoar antiquity."[1]

An instance of the fidelity with which these relics have thus been preserved was satisfactorily furnished by comparison of an English MS. of the ballad of *Edom o' Gordon*, supposed to be coeval with the date of the subject, with the traditionary form current in Scotland. There are, nevertheless, different versions of ballads commonly to be found with local adaptations. The origin of this voluminous body of traditionary poetry can for the most part be traced to no definite source. Much of it is undoubtedly founded on real events otherwise unrecorded; much of it can be connected with authentic history; while some of the legends, particularly those relating to dragons or monsters, when they cannot be distinctly alleged to be directly derived from the chivalrous romances, have probably a common origin with them. Several Scotch ballads have been found almost identical with old heroic ballads in the Danish language. When founded either upon public or private history, these compositions are believed to

[1] Motherwell, see Note, p. 293.

be generally contemporary with the events to which they relate, although, in the language of the authority already quoted, "localities and persons may be occasionally shifted to answer the meridian of the reciter, and obsolete terms and epithets laid aside for others more generally in use." Many ballads are common to both England and Scotland, the Borderland being their native, or at least their favourite, seat; and while most of these may be traceable backwards to the fifteenth century or earlier, none of them descend later than the sixteenth.

In illustration of what has just been stated, *Hynd Horn* may be mentioned as an example of the ballads that have been derived from the old metrical romance, and it therefore belongs to the class of purely romantic ballads. The hero falls in love with the King's daughter; the lovers exchange tokens; Hynd Horn is exiled by the King, but after an absence of seven years, returns in time to prevent the marriage of the princess to another. We give the first seven verses as a specimen:—

HYND HORN.

Near the King's Court was a young child born,
With a hey lillelu and a how lo lan;
And his name it was called young Hynd Horn,
And the birk and the broom blooms bonnie.

Seven lang years he served the King,
With a hey lillelu and a how lo lan;
And it's a' for the sake o' his daughter Jean,
And the birk and the broom blooms bonnie.

The King an angry man was he,
With a hey lillelu and a how lo lan;
He sent young Hynd Horn to the sea,
And the birk and the broom blooms bonnie.

O his love gave him a gay gold ring,
With a hey lillelu and a how lo lan;
With three shining diamonds set therein,
And the birk and the broom blooms bonnie.

"As lang as these diamonds keep their hue,
With a hey lillelu and a how lo lan;
Ye'll know I am a lover true,
And the birk and the broom blooms bonnie.

"But when your ring turns pale and wan,
With a hey lillelu and a how lo lan;
Then I'm in love with another man,
And the birk and the broom blooms bonnie."

He's gone to the sea and far away,
With a hey lillelu and a how lo lan;
And he's stayed for seven lang years and a day,
And the birk and the broom blooms bonnie.

Among the more esteemed of the traditionary ballads of Scotland, native to the soil, are *Patrick Spens* and *Helen of Kirkconnel*. *Tamlane*, another Scotch ballad, is of the purely ideal and supernatural class.

Of the well-known Border ballad of *Chevy Chase*, or *The Hunting of the Cheviot*, there are two versions,—the older one composed about the time of Henry VIII., and the other not later than that of James I. The story has no foundation in fact, so far as is known, but some of its details have been borrowed from that historical episode upon which another ballad, *The Battle of Otterbourne*, is founded. We subjoin the first *fytte* of a modernized version of that ballad which stirred the heart of Sir Philip Sidney as the sound of a trumpet:—

THE HUNTING OF THE CHEVIOT.

The Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he,
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three,
In the maugre[1] of doughty Douglas,
And all that with him be.

The fattest harts in all Cheviot
He said he would kill and carry away;
"By my faith," said the doughty Douglas again,
"I will let that hunting if I may."

Then the Percy out of Bamborough came,
And with him a mighty meyné,[2]
Fifteen hundred archers, of blood and bone,
They were chosen out of shires three.

[1] "Maugre," in spite of.

[2] "Meyné," company.

This began on a Monday at morn,
In Cheviot, the hills so hie:
The child may rue it that is unborn
It was the more pitie.

The drivers thorough the woodès went,
For to raise the deer;
Bowmen bicker'd upon the bent
With their broad arrows clear.

Then the wild[1] thorough the woodès went,
On every side shear;[2]
Greyhounds thorough the greves[3] glent[4]
For to kill their deer.

They began in Cheviot, the hills above,
Early on Monanday;
By that it drew to the hour of noon,
A hundred fat hartès dead there lay.

They blew a mort upon the bent,
They assembled on sides shear;
To the quarry[5] then the Percy went,
To the brittling[6] of the deer.

He said, "It was the Douglas's promise
This day to meet me here
But I wist he would fail, verament,"[7]—
A great oath the Percy sware.

At last a squire of Northumberland
Looked at his hand full nigh;
He was ware of[8] the doughty Douglas coming,
With him a mighty meyné;

Both with spear, bill, and brand:
It was a mighty sight to see;
Hardier men, both of heart and hand,
Were not in Christiantie.

They were twenty hundred spearmen good,
Withouten any fail;
They were born along by the Water of Tweed,
In the bounds of Tivydale.

[1] "Wild," game.
[2] "Shear," straight and swift.
[3] "Greves," groves.
[4] "Glent," glanced.
[5] "Quarry," prey.
[6] "Brittling," cutting up.
[7] "Verament," truly.
[8] "Was ware of," perceived.

"Leave off brittling the deer," he said,
"To your bows look ye take good heed;
For since ye were of your mothers born
Had ye never so mickle[1] need."

The doughty Douglas on a steed
He rode all his men beforne;
His armour glittered as a glede;[2]
A bolder barne[3] was never born.

"Tell me who ye are," he says,
"Or whose men that ye be;
Who gave you leave to hunt in this chace
In the spite of me?"

The first man that ever him answer made,
It was the good Lord Percy:
"We will not tell thee who we are,
Nor whose men that we be;
But we will hunt here in this chace,
In spite of thine and thee.

"The fattest harts in all Cheviot
We have killed, and cast[4] to carry away."
"By my troth," said the doughty Douglas again,
"Therefor shall one of us die this day."

Then said the doughty Douglas
Unto the Lord Percy,
"To kill all these guiltless men,
Alas, it were great pitie!

"But, Percy, thou art a lord of land,
And I am earl called in my countrie;
Let all our men apart from us stand,
And do the battle off thee and me."

"Now, curse on his crown," said the Lord Percy,
"Whosoever thereto says nay!—
By my troth, doughty Douglas," he says,
"Thou never shalt see that day.

"Neither in England, Scotland, nor France,
Of woman born there is none,
But, an fortune be my chance,
I dare meet him, one man for one."

[1] "Mickle," much.
[2] "Glede," fire.
[3] "Barne," man-child.
[4] "Cast," intend.

Then spake a squire of Northumberland,
Richard Witherington was his name:
"It shall never be told in South England," he says,
"To King Harry the Fourth for shame!

"I wot ye bin great lordès two,
I am a poor squire of land;
I'll ne'er see my captain fight on a field,
And a looker-on to stand;
But while I may my weapon wield
I will fail not, heart and hand."

That day, that day, that dreadful day!—
The first fytte here I find.
And ye will hear more of the Hunting of Cheviot,
Yet more there is behind.

The *Robin Hood Ballads* form a cycle of themselves. They relate the adventures of the bold outlaw; how he and his seven score of merry men shot the King's deer in the forest-land of Nottinghamshire, levied contributions upon the rich, and relieved the wants of the poor; defied the Sheriff of Nottingham; and prized above all sport the entertainment of a jolly abbot at dinner under the greenwood tree, with Robin and Little John as his attendants at table, after they had lightened him of his money-bags.

Robin, according to tradition, was the son of a nobleman, and was not the less a real character in the popular imagination, although he could not be identified with any historical character. Enough that, like a stout-hearted English yeoman, he could "slice the wand" at every shot, and never thought of counting his enemies but by the twang of his bow; while his deft and stalwart lieutenants, Little Much, Will Scarlet, and Gilbert "with the white hand," had only to bend their bows to bring fifty men to the halt.

Eight of the old connected ballads, each called a *fytte*, form a kind of epic, entitled *A Lytell Geste of Robin Hode*.[1] It relates, among other things, how Robin lent a poor knight a hundred pounds; how he reimbursed himself of his loan by means of a

[1] The *Lytell Geste* was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, towards the end of the fifteenth century.

monk of St. Mary's Abbey; how he went to a public shooting at Nottingham and was attacked by the Sheriff; how he was visited by the King; and how he was betrayed by Sir Roger of Doncaster and the Prioress of Kirkesly. The following extract pretty comprehensively describes the foreign policy of the Forest King:—

A LYTELL GESTE OF ROBYN HODE.

FROM THE FIRST FYTTE.

Robyn stode in Barnysdale,
And lened hym to a tree;
And by hym stode Lytell Johan,
A good yeman was he;

And also dyd good Scathelock,
And Much the miller's sone;
There was no ynche of his body
But it was worth a grome.[1]

Then bespake him Lytell Johan
All unto Robyn Hode,
"Mayster, yf ye wold dyne betyme,
It wolde do you moch good."

Then bespake good Robyn,
"To dyne I have no lust,
Tyll I have some bold barón,
Or some unketh[2] guest,

"(Or els some byshop or abbot)
That may paye for the best;
Or some knyght or some squyere
That dwelleth here by west."

A good maner than[3] had Robyn,
In londe where that he were:
Every daye or he woulde dyne
Thre messes wolde he here.

Robyn loved Our Dere Lady;
For doute[4] of dedely synne,
Wolde he never do company harme
That ony woman was ynne.

[1] Meaning uncertain. [2] Strange. [3] Then. [4] Dread.

"Mayster," than sayd Lytell Johan,
"And we our borde shall sprede,
Tell us whither we shall gone,
And what lyfe we shall lede;

"Where we shall take, where we shall leve,
Where we shall abide behynde,
Where we shall robbe, where we shall reve,[1]
Where we shall bete and bynde."

"Thereof no fors,"[2] sayd Robyn,
We shall do well enow;
But loke ye do no housbonde[3] harme
That tylleth with his plough;

"No more ye shall no good yemàn,
That walketh by grene-wode shawe,
Ne no knyght, ne no squyèr,
That wolde be a good felawe.

"These bysshoppes, and thyse archebysshoppes,
Ye shall them bete and bynde;
The hye sheryfe of Notynghame,
Hym holde in your mynde."

"This worde shall be holde," said Lytell Johan,
"And this lesson shall we lere;[4]
It is ferre dayes,[5] God send us a guest,
That we were at our dynere."

"Take thy good bowe in thy hande," said Robyn,
"Let Moche wende with the,
And so shall Wyllyam Scathelocke,
And no man abyde with me;

"And walke up to the Sayles,
And so to Watlynge-strete,[6]
And wayte after some unketh guest,
Up-chaunce[7] ye mowe[8] them mete.

"Be he erle or ony barón,
Abbot or ony knyght,
Brynge hym to lodge to me,
Hys dyner shall be dyght."

[1] Plunder. [2] No matter. [3] Husbandman. [4] Learn.
[5] Late in the day. [6] One of the Roman roads. [7] Perchance. [8] May.

The publication of *Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, and its effect upon the subsequent character of our poetry, has already been mentioned. The contents were chiefly obtained from an ancient manuscript. Collections of old ballads had, however, been previously published both in London and Edinburgh; and amongst these, particular mention may be made of Allan Ramsay's *Evergreen* and *Tea Table Miscellany* (1724). An important accession to this department of literature was Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802–3), including about forty pieces that had never before been printed, and of which it may be safely asserted that that publication preserved most of them from falling into oblivion. It was followed by Jameson's *Popular Ballads and Songs* in 1806, and by Motherwell's *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern*, in 1827. Many other collections might be added to the list, amongst the most recent of which are Professor Aytoun's *Scottish Ballads* (1858), and the *Ballad Book* (1864) by William Allingham. To the latter we acknowledge our obligations for the preceding extracts.

### HELEN OF KIRKCONNEL.

Of this ballad there are two old versions, besides that here given, which was written by JOHN MAYNE (1761–1836). Helen Irving, a young lady of distinguished beauty, daughter of the Laird of Kirkconnel, in Annandale, was betrothed to Adam Fleming de Kirkpatrick, a young nobleman in that district. While the two lovers were walking along the banks of the Kirtle, she received the death wound directed by a disappointed rival at her betrothed, who thus laments the fate of fair Helen:—

I wish I were where Helen lies,
For night and day on me she cries;
And, like an angel, to the skies
Still seems to beckon me!
For me she lived, for me she sighed,
For me she wished to be a bride;
For me in life's sweet morn she died
On fair Kirkconnel-Lee!

Where Kirtle-waters gently wind,
As Helen on my arm reclined,
A rival with a ruthless mind
Took deadly aim at me:
My love, to disappoint the foe,
Rushed in between me and the blow;
And now her corse is lying low
On fair Kirkconnel-Lee!

Though Heaven forbids my wrath to swell,
I curse the hand by which she fell—
The fiend who made my heaven a hell,
And tore my love from me!
For if, where all the graces shine—
Oh, if on earth there's aught divine,
My Helen, all these charms were thine—
They centered all in thee!

Ah, what avails it that, amain,
I clove the assassin's head in twain?
No peace of mind, my Helen slain,
No resting-place for me:
I see her spirit in the air—
I hear the shriek of wild despair,
When murder laid her bosom bare
On fair Kirkconnel-Lee!

Oh, when I'm sleeping in my grave,
And o'er my head the rank weeds wave,
May He who life and spirit gave
Unite my love and me!
Then from this world of doubts and sighs
My soul on wings of peace shall rise,
And, joining Helen in the skies,
Forget Kirkconnel-Lee!

## CHAPTER IV.

### PROSE WRITERS.

Johnson—Hume—Robertson—Gibbon—Sterne—Minor Novelists—Miscellaneous Writers.

#### SAMUEL JOHNSON—1709-1784.

Samuel Johnson, the great lexicographer, critic, and moralist, was the son of Michael Johnson, a bookseller in Lichfield. In that town he was born, and received the rudiments of his education. His means being limited, he was unable to complete the curriculum upon which he entered at Oxford;[1] and on the death of his father he became usher at a school in Bosworth. He subsequently opened an educational establishment in his native town, where the celebrated Garrick was one of his pupils; but the adventure not succeeding, in 1737 he repaired to London in search of literary employment. For years he struggled with poverty and neglect, and was frequently compelled to pass the day without a dinner. As a means of subsistence, literature was then so unremunerative, that when Johnson, on his arrival in the metropolis, informed Wilcox the bookseller how he intended to support himself, he expressed his disapproval by exclaiming that he had better purchase a porter's knot! In 1738 he published his poem of *London*, and in 1749, *The Vanity of Human Wishes;* the first an imitation of the third, and the second of the tenth satire of Juvenal. Every admirer of poetry is familiar with the sterling merit of these versions, which are admitted to equal the best efforts of Pope in the same department; and yet for the first he received no more than ten guineas, and for the second only five more, even after he had begun to establish his reputation. In the interval between these two dates he had become a contributor to *The Gentleman's Magazine;* and from 1740 to 1742 he composed for that periodical the parliamentary debates,

[1] The degree of Doctor of Laws was afterwards conferred upon him by that University.

in which are included the celebrated speeches of Walpole and Pitt. Of these Johnson avowed himself to be the sole writer, long after they had procured for their supposed authors the fame of rivalling Demosthenes. In 1747 he began that remarkable monument of talent and industry, *The English Dictionary*, and in eight years it was completed. In the meantime, besides pamphlets and a great number of miscellaneous productions, he had with very slight assistance written the *Rambler*, a series of moral and critical essays, printed twice every week, and extending over a period of two years. After supporting himself for some years by subscriptions for an edition of Shakspeare, by a new periodical called the *Idler*, and by the sale of *Rasselas* (1753), his merits were at length acknowledged by a pension of £300 a year conferred upon him by George III. in 1762. In 1773 he made a journey, in company with Mr. Boswell, to the Western Islands of Scotland; an excursion of which he published an account in his *Tour to the Hebrides;* and a diary which he kept of subsequent visits to Wales and Paris is preserved by Boswell. His *Lives of the Poets*, a work which proves that his mental powers were only strengthened by advancing age, was completed in 1781. His last residence in London was in Bolt Court, Fleet Street, where he died in 1784.

The habits and personal appearance of Johnson are minutely described in his entertaining and instructive biography by Boswell. His figure was huge and ungainly; his vision was defective in consequence of scrofulous disease; and a nervous affection constantly subjected his limbs to odd involuntary motions. He possessed an indomitable independence of spirit, which he preserved when at the lowest ebb of his fortunes; and to the intensity of this trait may perhaps be referred the prominent defects of his character, —a propensity to brow-beating in argument, and an impatience of contradiction that too frequently expressed itself by violent rudeness. But his real moral worth was such as few characters can present. He was constant in inculcating the importance of religion, and his life afforded the best example of his precepts. Charitable in his opinions, and benevolent in his actions, he was

ever ready to assist the distressed by his purse or his influence; and his house was literally a refuge for the destitute. For the purpose of literary intercourse, as well as relief from more severe occupations, he instituted a club, of which, among other eminent men of the day, Goldsmith, Garrick, Burke, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, were members. His conversation was as fluent and majestic as his writings, and in argument or reproof his ingenuity and power of retort were irresistible. His vast memory seemed capable not only of retaining, but of promptly calling forth when wanted, every line and every image with which it had been stored. In his own time his critical fiat was regarded with the reverence that had formerly been awarded to that of Dryden and Pope; and there is no era in the history of English prose more distinctly marked than that introduced by his works. Of the two great prose classics of the preceding generation, Swift and Addison, simplicity was the common characteristic, distinguished in the first by force, and in the latter by gracefulness; but in the ornate and sonorous periods of Johnson, the structure is involved and artificial, and Latin derivations are systematically preferred to those of Saxon origin. The dignity of style that he admittedly conferred upon the English language is in his own writings sustained by the highest attributes of genius; and if there be any works with which the perpetuity of that language is indissolubly linked, we believe the *Lives of the Poets* and the Preface to Shakspeare to be among the number. In the *Rambler*, where words are frequently made to stand for ideas, the defects of the Johnsonian style are more apparent than in his later works.

### FROM "THE LIVES OF THE POETS."

#### PARALLEL BETWEEN POPE AND DRYDEN.

Integrity of understanding and nicety of discernment were not allotted in a less proportion to Dryden than to Pope. The rectitude of Dryden's mind was sufficiently shown by the dismission of his poetical prejudices, and the rejection of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers. But Dryden never desired to apply all the judgment that he had. He wrote, and professed to write, merely for the people; and when he pleased others, he contented himself. He spent no time in struggles to rouse latent powers; he never attempted to make that better which

was already good, nor often to mend what he must have known to be faulty. He wrote, as he tells us, with very little consideration: when occasion or necessity called upon him, he poured out what the present moment happened to supply, and when once it had passed the press, ejected it from his mind, for when he had no pecuniary interest, he had no further solicitude. Pope was not content to satisfy, he desired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his best: he did not court the candour, but dared the judgment of his reader, and expecting no indulgence from others, he showed none to himself. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence, till he had left nothing to be forgiven. For this reason he kept his pieces very long in his hands, while he considered and reconsidered them.

His declaration that his care for his works ceased at their publication was not strictly true. His parental attention never abandoned them; what he found amiss in the first edition, he silently corrected in those that followed. He appears to have revised the *Iliad*, and freed it from some of its imperfections; and the *Essay on Criticism* received many improvements after its first appearance. It will seldom be found that he altered without adding clearness, elegance, or vigour. Pope had perhaps the judgment of Dryden, but Dryden certainly wanted the diligence of Pope.

In acquired knowledge, the superiority must be allowed to Dryden, whose education was more scholastic, and who, before he became an author, had been allowed more time for study, with better means of information. His mind has a larger range, and he collects his images and illustrations from a more extensive circumference of science. Dryden knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehensive speculation; those of Pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden, and more certainty in that of Pope.

Poetry was not the sole praise of either, for both excelled likewise in prose; but Pope did not borrow his prose from his predecessor. The style of Dryden is capricious and varied; that of Pope is cautious and uniform. Dryden obeys the motions of his own mind; Pope constrains his mind to his own rules of composition. Dryden is sometimes vehement and rapid; Pope is always smooth, uniform, and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, rising into inequalities, and diversified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, and levelled by the roller.

Of genius—that power which constitutes a poet; that quality without which judgment is cold, and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates—the superiority must, with some hesitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred that of this poetical vigour Pope had only a little, because Dryden had more; for every other writer since Milton must give place to Pope; and even of Dryden it must be said, that if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always hasty, either excited by some external occasion, or extorted by domestic necessity; he composed without consideration, and published without correction. What his mind could supply at call, or gather in one excursion, was all that he sought, and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condense his

sentiments, to multiply his images, and to accumulate all that study might produce, or chance might supply. If the flights of Dryden, therefore, are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

### DAVID HUME—1711–1776.

David Hume was born in Edinburgh in 1711. He was intended for the profession of the law, but literature was a pursuit more congenial to his taste; and while his friends, as he himself tells us, fancied he was poring over Voet and Vinnius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors he was secretly devouring. He at length came to the resolution of devoting himself entirely to the cultivation of literature; and he retired for some years to France to prosecute his studies. He was subsequently honoured with several public appointments, and, in the capacity of secretary, accompanied embassies to the Courts of Vienna, Turin, and Paris. When librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, he commenced his celebrated *History of England*, the first volume of which, commencing with the accession of the Stuarts, was published in 1754. He had previously published his *Treatise of Human Nature* and his *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, wherein he propounds the doctrine, that the morality of human actions is to be estimated according to their utility. These metaphysical theories of Hume materially affected the subsequent course of philosophical speculation. He died in 1776.

Notwithstanding a deficiency in information and an inaccuracy of detail which frequently betray the writer into false conclusions, Hume's *History of England* will always hold its high rank on account of its literary merits. He excels in easy and graceful narrative, with a quiet power of vivid and dramatic description, a deep intuitive insight into character, and a rich vein of philosophical and apposite reflection in estimating motives and events, while the placidity and candour of his disposition preserve from extravagance even his avowed bias in favour of despotism and the Stuarts.

### CHARACTER OF HENRY VIII.

It is difficult to give a just summary of this prince's qualities: he was so different from himself in different parts of his reign, that, as is well remarked by Lord Herbert, his history is his best character and description. The absolute, uncontrolled authority, which he maintained at home, and the regard which he acquired among foreign nations, are circumstances which entitle him in some degree to the appellation of a great prince; while his tyranny and barbarity exclude him from the character of a good one. He possessed, indeed, great vigour of mind, which qualified him for exercising dominion over men, courage, intrepidity, vigilance, inflexibility: and though these qualities lay not always under the guidance of a regular and solid judgment, they were accompanied with good parts and an extensive capacity; and every one dreaded a contest with a man who was known never to yield or to forgive, and who, in every controversy, was determined either to ruin himself or his antagonist. A catalogue of his vices would comprehend many of the worst qualities incident to human nature: violence, cruelty, profusion, rapacity, injustice, obstinacy, arrogance, bigotry, presumption, caprice. But neither was he subject to all these vices in the most extreme degree, nor was he at intervals altogether destitute of virtue: he was sincere, open, gallant, liberal, and capable at least of a temporary friendship and attachment. In this respect he was unfortunate, that the incidents of his reign served to display his faults in their full light: the treatment which he met with from the court of Rome provoked him to violence; the danger of a revolt from his superstitious subjects seemed to require the most extreme severity. But it must at the same time be acknowledged, that his situation tended to throw an additional lustre on what was great and magnanimous in his character: the emulation between the emperor and the French king rendered his alliance, notwithstanding his impolitic conduct, of great importance in Europe: the extensive powers of his prerogative, and the submissive, not to say slavish disposition of his parliaments, made it the more easy for him to assume and maintain that entire dominion, by which his reign is so much distinguished in the English history.

It may seem a little extraordinary, that notwithstanding his cruelty, his extortion, his violence, his arbitrary administration, this prince not only acquired the regard of his subjects, but never was the object of their hatred: he seems even in some degree to have possessed to the last their love and affection. His exterior qualities were advantageous, and fit to captivate the multitude; his magnificence and personal bravery rendered him illustrious in vulgar eyes; and it may be said with truth, that the English in that age were so thoroughly subdued, that, like eastern slaves, they were inclined to admire those acts of violence and tyranny which were exercised over themselves, and at their own expense.

## WILLIAM ROBERTSON—1721-1793.

William Robertson, D.D., the intimate friend of Hume, was a native of Borthwick, in the county of Edinburgh. He was successively minister of Gladsmuir, in East Lothian, and Lady

Yester's in Edinburgh ; and after the publication of his *History of Scotland* in 1759, he was appointed Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and historiographer for Scotland. The *History of the Reign of Charles V.* (1769), was followed by the *History of America* in 1777 ; and each of these works brought an accession to the high reputation the author had at once acquired by his first production.

The names of Hume and Robertson are as frequently associated as those of Pope and Dryden ; the comparison being naturally invited both by their mutual friendship, and by the circumstance of their cultivating the same department of literature.

The style of Robertson, more artificial than that of Hume, is nevertheless distinguished for purity and elegance ; while in respect of accuracy and research he is more reliable as an authority, Hume having frequently taken slight trouble to verify his statements at the source of information. The able historical summaries and introductory disquisitions of Robertson have always been regarded as one of his chief merits. His theory of historical composition excluded all details that might interfere with dignity of style and unity of narrative ; but his adherence to that theory did not prevent him from being both interesting and instructive.

### CHARACTERS OF FRANCIS I. AND THE EMPEROR CHARLES V.

During twenty-eight years an avowed rivalship subsisted between Francis I. and the Emperor Charles V., which involved not only their own dominions, but the greatest part of Europe, in wars which were prosecuted with more violent animosity, and drawn out to a greater length, than had been known in any former period. Many circumstances contributed to this. Their animosity was founded in opposition of interest, heightened by personal emulation, and exasperated not only by mutual injuries, but by reciprocal insults. At the same time, whatever advantage one seemed to possess towards gaining the ascendant, was wonderfully balanced by some favourable circumstance peculiar to the other.

The emperor's dominions were of greater extent ; the French king's lay more compact. Francis governed his kingdom with absolute power ; that of Charles was limited, but he supplied the want of authority by address. The troops of the former were more impetuous and enterprising ; those of the latter better disciplined, and more patient of fatigue. The talents and abilities of the two monarchs were as different as the advantages which they possessed, and contributed no less to prolong the contest between them. Francis took his resolutions

suddenly, prosecuted them at first with warmth, and pushed them into execution with a most adventurous courage; but being destitute of the perseverance necessary to surmount difficulties, he often abandoned his designs, or relaxed the vigour of pursuit from impatience, and sometimes from levity. Charles deliberated long and determined with coolness; but having once fixed his plan, he adhered to it with inflexible obstinacy, and neither danger nor discouragement could turn him aside from the execution of it. The success of their enterprises was suitable to the diversity of their characters, and was uniformly influenced by it. Francis, by his impetuous activity, often disconcerted the emperor's best laid schemes; Charles, by a more calm but steady prosecution of his designs, checked the rapidity of his rival's career, and baffled or repulsed his most vigorous efforts. The former, at the opening of a war or of a campaign, broke in upon the enemy with the violence of a torrent, and carried all before him; the latter, waiting until he saw the force of his rival beginning to abate, recovered in the end not only all that he had lost, but made new acquisitions. Few of the French monarch's attempts towards conquest, whatever promising aspect they might wear at first, were conducted to a happy issue; many of the emperor's enterprises, even after they appeared desperate and impracticable, terminated in the most prosperous manner.

## EDWARD GIBBON—1737-1794.

The *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is one of those works that belong to the literature of all Europe. "It has obtained undisputed possession," says its editor, Dean Milman, "as rightful occupant of the vast period which it comprehends. However some subjects which it embraces may have undergone more complete investigation; on the general view of the whole subject, this history is the sole undisputed authority to which all defer, and from which few appeal to the original writers, or to more modern compilers. The inherent interest of the subject; the inexhaustible labour employed upon it; the immense condensation of matter; the luminous arrangement; the general accuracy; the style, which, however monotonous from its uniform stateliness, and sometimes wearisome from its elaborate art, is throughout vigorous; animated, often picturesque; always commands attention, always conveys its meaning with emphatic energy; describes with singular breadth and fidelity; and generalizes with unrivalled felicity of expression,—all these high qualifications have secured, and seem likely to secure, its permanent place in historic literature."

Edward Gibbon was born at Putney in 1737. He attended

Westminster School and Oxford University. He had become a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, and was sent by his father to reside with a Calvinist minister at Lausanne, where the effect desired by his father, his return to the Protestant faith, was obtained, and where he chiefly acquired that stock of erudition of which he gave so marvellous a proof in his celebrated work. On his return to England he was for some time a captain of militia, and the knowledge of military tactics he then acquired was of service to the historian of the Roman Empire. During a visit to Rome in 1764, "as he sat musing amid the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to his mind." The first volume was published in 1776, and the last in 1788. He died in 1794.

### CHARACTER OF MAHOMET.

According to the tradition of his companions, Mahomet was distinguished by the beauty of his person—an outward gift which is seldom despised, except by those to whom it has been refused. Before he spoke, the orator engaged on his side the affections of a public or private audience. They applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspect, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance that painted every sensation of the soul, and his gestures that enforced each expression of the tongue. In the familiar offices of life he scrupulously adhered to the grave and ceremonious politeness of his country: his respectful attention to the rich and powerful was dignified by his condescension and affability to the poorest citizens of Mecca; the frankness of his manner concealed the artifice of his views; and the habits of courtesy were imputed to personal friendship or universal benevolence. His memory was capacious and retentive, his wit easy and social, his imagination sublime, his judgment clear, rapid, and decisive. He possessed the courage both of thought and action; and although his designs might gradually expand with his success, the first idea which he entertained of his divine mission bears the stamp of an original and superior genius. The son of Abdallah was educated in the bosom of the noblest race, in the use of the purest dialect of Arabia; and the fluency of his speech was corrected and enhanced by the practice of discreet and seasonable silence. With these powers of eloquence, Mahomet was an illiterate barbarian; his youth had never been instructed in the arts of reading and writing; the common ignorance exempted him from shame or reproach, but he was reduced to a narrow circle of existence, and deprived of those faithful mirrors which reflect to our mind the minds of sages and heroes. Yet the book of nature and of man was open to his view; and some fancy has been indulged in the political and philosophical observations which are ascribed to the Arabian

traveller. He compares the nations and religions of the earth ; discovers the weakness of the Persian and Roman monarchies ; beholds with pity and indignation the degeneracy of the times ; and resolves to unite, under one God and one king, the invincible spirit and primitive virtues of the Arabs. Our more accurate inquiry will suggest, that instead of visiting the courts, the camps, the temples of the east, the two journeys of Mahomet into Syria were confined to the fairs of Bostra and Damascus ; that he was only thirteen years of age when he accompanied the caravan of his uncle ; and that his duty compelled him to return as soon as he had disposed of the merchandise of Cadijah. In these hasty and superficial excursions the eye of genius might discern some objects invisible to his grosser companions—some seeds of knowledge might be cast upon a fruitful soil ; but his ignorance of the Syriac language must have checked his curiosity, and I cannot perceive in the life or writings of Mahomet that his prospect was far extended beyond the limits of the Arabian world. From every region of that solitary world the pilgrims of Mecca were annually assembled by the calls of devotion and commerce : in the free concourse of multitudes, a simple citizen in his native tongue might study the political state and character of the tribes, the theory and practice of the Jews and Christians. Some useful strangers might be tempted or forced to implore the rites of hospitality ; and the enemies of Mahomet have named the Jew, the Persian, and the Syrian monk, whom they accuse of lending their secret aid to the composition of the Koran. Conversation enriches the understanding, but solitude is the school of genius ; and the uniformity of a work denotes the hand of a single artist. From his earliest youth Mahomet was addicted to religious contemplation : each year, during the month of Ramadan, he withdrew from the world and from the arms of Cadijah : in the cave of Hera, three miles from Mecca, he consulted the spirit of fraud or enthusiasm, whose abode is not in the heavens, but in the mind of the prophet. The faith which, under the name of Islam, he preached to his family and nation, is compounded of an eternal truth and a necessary fiction—that there is only one God, and that Mahomet is the apostle of God.

## LAURENCE STERNE—1713-1768.

Laurence Sterne was born of English parentage at Clonmel in 1713, his father being a lieutenant in the army. Having obtained several benefices in England through the interest of his relations, he resided for many years at his living of Sutton in Yorkshire, where, according to his own account, his amusements were "books, hunting, fiddling, and shooting." He there composed the first two volumes of *Tristram Shandy*, which were published in 1759. It amounted to nine volumes in all, the other seven being published at intervals. The remainder of his life was

chiefly spent in London, where he was admired and fêted as the great literary celebrity of the day. The *Sentimental Journey* was published in 1768, and he died in the same year.

"*Tristram Shandy* is no narrative, but a collection of scenes, dialogues, and portraits, humorous or affecting, intermixed with much wit, and with much learning, original or borrowed." The style is peculiarly quaint and affected. Sterne had been a diligent and extensive reader of the older writers, and many of his phrases, quotations, and illustrations have been traced to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and various authors, both English and French, whose works had fallen into oblivion. *Tristram Shandy* is nevertheless such a work as no other man could have written; and with reference to the preceding observations, he has therefore been termed one of the greatest plagiarists and one of the most original geniuses that England ever produced.

## MINOR NOVELISTS.

Amongst the novel writers of this period, one of the most talented and entertaining was FRANCES BURNEY (Madame D'ARBLAY), authoress of the novels of fashionable life entitled *Evelina* (1778) and *Cecilia* (1782). Miss Burney was the daughter of Dr. Burney, the friend of Dr. Johnson, and author of the *History of Music;* and her reputation obtained her an appointment in the royal household as keeper of the robes to Queen Charlotte. Her *Diary and Letters*, containing an interesting record of her observations and personal experiences during that period, were published after her death, which took place in 1840, at the age of eighty-eight. The *Simple Story* of MRS. INCHBALD, an exciting and impassioned tale, and the wild and highly imaginative Eastern romance of *Vathek*, by BECKFORD, are well known to readers of the present day. The numerous romances of the celebrated MRS. ANN RADCLIFFE, the principal of which are *The Romance of the Forest*, *The Italian*, and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, are full of startling and mysterious incidents, and glow with the richest effects that can be produced by poetical painting of grand and

beautiful scenery. *The Fool of Quality*, by BROOKE, and *The Man of Feeling*, by MACKENZIE, possessed a reputation in their time that was not altogether unmerited. *The Castle of Otranto* is a romance of the Gothic school, by HORACE WALPOLE.

The celebrated HANNAH MORE may be classed among this group in virtue of her didactic novel entitled *Cœlebs in Search of a Wife*, written with a professedly moral purpose; but her reputation is also founded on a very numerous list of excellent practical treatises on manners, education, and religion.

## MISCELLANEOUS WRITERS.

One of the greatest names of this period is that of EDMUND BURKE (1730–1797), who shines equally as a thinker, an orator, and a statesman. Like Bacon, he united the depth of the philosopher to the imagination of the poet, and his speeches and writings are master-pieces of reasoning and models of rhetorical splendour. He was a strong partisan, and a tower of strength to the Tory party during the stormy period of the French Revolution; but notwithstanding the vehemence of his political feelings, his observations upon passing events and his various disquisitions are so comprehensive and philosophical as to constitute a body of political science. Amongst these are *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, and *Thoughts on a Regicide Peace*. Of his numerous brilliant speeches, those which he delivered against Hastings are probably the most admired.

The *Letters* (1769–1772) of the unknown JUNIUS, the objects of whose unparalleled invective were the highest personages of the realm, stand alone in our literature for condensed power of sarcasm and magnificence of declamation. This powerful writer, who ranks among the most distinguished of English classics, has not yet been discovered, unless we accept the evidence adduced in support of his identification with Sir Philip Francis.

An era in the science of political economy, if it be not more correct to say the birth of that science, dates from the publication

of *The Wealth of Nations*, by Adam Smith, in which he laid down the fundamental principle now universally acknowledged, that labour is the true source of wealth, in opposition to the agricultural and mercantile theories which respectively ascribed that attribute to money and land. His *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, in which sympathy is held to be the foundation of morals, is more valued for the excellence of its style than for the soundness of its philosophy.

Archdeacon Paley (1743–1805) is the author of some of the most popular and valuable ethical and theological treatises we possess, including the *Horæ Paulinæ*, an able demonstration of the genuineness of Saint Paul's Epistles and the narrative contained in the Acts of the Apostles, *View of the Evidences of Christianity*, *Natural Theology*, and *Elements of Moral and Political Philosophy*. He is distinguished for his clear, intelligible style, his strong good sense, and happy method of illustration. The *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, by Sir William Blackstone, is a recognised text-book and authority on the subject, written in a style that fits it for the non-professional reader. The *Letters* of Horace Walpole rank among the most felicitous examples of epistolary composition, for ease, fluency, and light witty observation; abundantly seasoned, however, with the sarcastic and malicious humour of the writer. He was the author of several volumes connected with his favourite literary and artistic pursuits, and left for publication *Memoirs of the Court of George II.*, which were not given to the world till after his death.

Amongst the metaphysical writers of this period are Reid, Tucker, and Priestley; in criticism and belles lettres occur the names of Blair, Hurd, Chesterfield, Steevens, Malone, and Ritson; and in divinity, those of Horsley, Watson, and Porteous.

The *Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, by James Boswell, published in 1791, is universally acknowledged to be the most successful and entertaining specimen of biographical writing that exists in any language.

## EDMUND BURKE.

### DESTRUCTION OF THE CARNATIC.

FROM SPEECH ON THE NABOB OF ARCOT'S DEBTS.

When at length Hyder Ali found that he had to do with men who either would sign no convention, or whom no treaty and no signature could bind, and who were the determined enemies of human intercourse itself, he decreed to make the country possessed by these incorrigible and predestinated criminals a memorable example to mankind. He resolved, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those against whom the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection. He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the Nabob of Arcot, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction, and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on the menacing meteor which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants flying from the flaming villages in part were slaughtered, others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank or sacredness of function; fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest fled to the walled cities; but escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine.

The alms of the settlement in this dreadful exigency were certainly liberal, and all was done by charity that private charity could do; but it was a people in beggary—it was a nation that stretched out its hands for food. For months together these creatures of sufferance, whose very excess and luxury in their most plenteous days had fallen short of the allowance of our austerest fasts, silent, patient, resigned, without sedition or disturbance, almost without complaint, perished by a hundred a day in the streets of Madras; every day seventy at least laid their bodies in the streets or on the glacis of Tanjore, and expired of famine in the granary of India. I was going to awake your justice towards this unhappy part of our fellow-citizens, by bringing before you some of the circumstances of this plague of hunger. Of all the calamities which beset and waylay the life of man, this comes the nearest to our heart, and is that wherein the

proudest of us all feels himself to be nothing more than he is: but I find myself unable to manage it with decorum. These details are of a species of horror so nauseous and disgusting; they are so degrading to the sufferers and to the hearers; they are so humiliating to human nature itself, that, on better thoughts, I find it more advisable to throw a pall over this hideous object, and to leave it to your general conceptions. . . . . .

For eighteen months without intermission this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore; and so completely did these masters in their art, Hyder Ali and his more ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march did they not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever. One dead uniform silence reigned over the whole region.

# THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

Prose fiction—The periodical press—German influence—The lays of Scott—Character of his poetry—Wordsworth's poetical theory—The Lake Poets—Byron—Moore's Irish lyrics and satirical pieces—Shelley, Keats, and Hunt—Wolfe, and other poets—Tennyson—The Brownings—Hood—American poets—Novelists—The drama—Metaphysical and other writers—Criticism and Belles Lettres—History—Macaulay and Carlyle—Origin of periodical literature.

It does not fall within the design of this volume to present more than an outline of the literature of the present century. It naturally suggests two divisions, the first of which may be considered to terminate about the time of Scott's death in 1832, and is distinguished by an opulence of poetical genius that may be comprehensively described as combining the warmth and imagination of the Elizabethan poets with the ease, refinement, and variety, derived from the cultivation of two additional centuries. In prose fiction this was also the era of the historical romance, founded by Scott in the Waverley series, whose track was successfully pursued by Bulwer and the American Cooper.

In the second division of the period, and particularly in the latter part of it, the historical romance has been superseded by various new schools of fiction, devoted to the delineation of modern and contemporary life, at the head of which stand the names of Dickens and Thackeray, but in which a conspicuous place must also be assigned to Bulwer and others. One of the most prominent features of the literature of the present day is the vast influence of the Periodical Press, and the talent which pervades it in every department, from the daily newspaper, in which passing events are frequently made the subject of brilliant and profound dis-

quisitions, to the magazine and review, which have become the most ordinary medium of intercourse between the reading public and the great writers of the day.

The great convulsion of the French Revolution, which modified so materially the whole character of European society, was accompanied by a literary development not dissimilar in fervour and universality to that which followed the completion of the Reformation, the resemblance between the two periods being most conspicuous in the outburst of poetical splendour by which they are both distinguished. The extent to which the new literary era was anticipated has been indicated in the introductory remarks to the last period; and among the more palpable of the sources from which our modern poetry first imbibed its spirit, Wordsworth attaches great importance to the German poetry. The influence of the German mind upon English literature, probably over-estimated with respect to poetry, has operated powerfully in the departments of theology, criticism, philology, and speculative philosophy.

Although Scott began his literary career by his translations from the German poet Bürger, his chivalrous lays, which, together with his prose writings, have coloured our literature so extensively, were inspirations drawn from the fountain-head, the medieval lays and romances, and the oral and written ballad poetry of his native land.[1] *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, published in 1805, was, on its first appearance, described as "an attempt to transfer the refinements of modern poetry to the manner and the matter of the metrical romance." The masterly hand that first analyzed Scott's poetry found its style to be marked by a free use of the commonplaces of poetical diction, with novelty of combination and rapidity of transition. His composition is not distinguished by studious polish or elegance; but instead of these, we have fervour, animation, and the most vivid pictorial power, both in the description of scenery and incident. He adopted the octosyllabic form of verse as the vehicle of his spirited narratives.

[1] His publication of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* has been mentioned in page 330.

Wordsworth, the poet of reflection, as Scott was the poet of narrative, professed the intention of writing poetry upon a new plan—the selection of his themes from the humblest ranks of society, and the ordinary aspects and occurrences of life and nature. At the age of fourteen, as he informs us himself, he made a resolution to supply the deficiency in the description of the infinite variety of appearances in nature that had been unnoticed by the poets of any age or country; and, as an illustration, he notices in the *Evening Walk* how the leaves and boughs of the oak darken and come out when seen against the sunset. In 1798 appeared the *Lyrical Ballads*, written in exemplification of his poetical theory; but in not a few of his best pieces that theory is departed from both in respect of form and subject. *The Excursion*, which is reflective, didactic, and descriptive, may perhaps be regarded as his most typical production. The reputation of Wordsworth was of slow growth, but the influence of his example upon English poetry, both in form and spirit, is now everywhere visible. Some of the leading characteristics of his poetry are thus eloquently described by one of the most recent exponents of his life and genius: "Seeing deeper truth and beauty in many things which had hitherto been deemed unfit subjects for poetry than in those which had hitherto been most handled by the poets, he reclaimed from the wilderness vast tracts that had been lying waste, and brought them within the poetic domain. In this way he has done a wider service to poetry than any other poet of his time. . . . . Taking the commonest sights of earth and the lowliest facts of life, to elevate and ennoble these, to find pathways by which the mind may naturally pass upward to 'an ampler ether, a diviner air,' this is his peculiar function. If he seldom ventures within the inner sanctuary, he everywhere leads to its outer court, lifts our thoughts into a region 'neighbouring to heaven, and that no foreign land.' If he was not universal in the sense in which Shakspeare was, and Goethe aimed to be, it was because he was smitten with too deep an enthusiasm for those truths by which he was possessed. His eye was too intense, too prophetic, to admit of his looking at life dramatically. In fact, no poet of modern

times has had in him so much of the prophet. In the world of nature, to be a revealer of things hidden, an interpreter of new and unsuspected relations, the opener of a new sense in men; in the moral world, the teacher of truths hitherto neglected or unobserved, the awakener of the consciousness to the solemnities that encompass life, deepening our reverence for the essential soul, apart from accident and circumstance, making men feel more truly, more tenderly, more profoundly, lifting the thoughts upward through the shows of time to that which is permanent and eternal, —this is the office which he will not cease to fulfil as long as the English language lasts."[1]

The name of Wordsworth is naturally associated with that of Coleridge, who would probably have equalled him as a poetical authority had he cultivated his genius with the same assiduity. There are some, however, who think, and perhaps not erroneously, that Coleridge's rank as one of the mightiest of imaginative poets could scarcely have been heightened by any addition to his few and fragmentary but magnificent relics. His *Ancient Mariner* was a contribution to the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth. The melodious beauty of his *Christabel* haunted the imagination of Scott and Byron, who imitated its irregular accentual rhythm in their own pieces. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, were termed the Lake Poets; a classification not founded on the common character of their poetry, but on their residence in the Lake District. The poems of Southey are now comparatively neglected; but his prose works contain some of the best specimens of biographical writing we possess.

Following in the wake of Scott, and adopting, after his example, the narrative form for excursions more impassioned, brilliant, and lofty, Lord Byron at once eclipsed the fame of all his contemporaries. The extraordinary interest and enthusiasm inspired by his works during his lifetime were partly owing to his supposed identity with the character, if not with the history, of his mysterious heroes; but this adventitious aid was by no means necessary to attract attention to the magnificent descriptions and burning eloquence

[1] North British Review, No. LXXXI.

of *Childe Harold*, or the sublimity of *Manfred*, not to mention innumerable passages which can only perish with the language. His narrative has all the ease and animation of Scott, whom he far excels in imagination; and in his own vein of wit, humour, and raillery, he is simply unrivalled and inimitable. As an emotional poet he may be classed with Burns, by whom alone he is equalled in a certain character of tenderness and pathos. The most partial admirers of his genius cannot but regret that some of the best of his poems reflect too faithfully the reckless career to which, unfortunately, so much of his life was abandoned; some of their blemishes consisting in associating in the character of his heroes the most attractive and commanding mental endowments with vices of corresponding magnitude, and in the mingled tone of levity and despair in which he discourses upon the nature and destiny of man. In his latest work he exhibits a propensity to convert Apollo into Momus by parodying the flights of his own fancy. After describing the rainbow, for example, with the gorgeous colouring of Spenser or Fletcher, he concludes by comparing it to "a black eye in a recent scuffle;" and in a similar spirit he frequently trifles with the feelings as well as the taste of his readers. As a model of genuine English, Byron may be compared with Pope, his style being pure, clear, and intelligible, thoroughly free from obscurity or mysticism, and unalloyed by eccentricity or extravagance of expression.

Combining the fastidious polish and regularity of the French school with the fervour of the new era, *The Pleasures of Hope*, the earliest of Campbell's poems, contains numerous passages whose familiarity to all readers of poetry is the most conclusive proof of their merit; and the fame it procured the author was greatly increased by his subsequent pieces, particularly his noble and spirit-stirring odes, *The Battle of the Baltic*, *Ye Mariners of England*, and others of a similar character. One of the most esteemed contributions to poetical criticism is his *Specimens of the British Poets*. The sweet *Irish Songs* and *Irish Melodies* of Thomas Moore are even more likely to perpetuate his name than his Eastern tale of *Lallah Rookh*, begemmed and clustered though

it be with the orient pearls of fancy. Nothing can exceed the liveliness and luxuriance of the wit that sparkles in such of this versatile writer's light satirical pieces as *The Twopenny Post Bag* and the *Fudge Family in Paris.*

Percy Bysshe Shelley, for spirituality of imagination and ethereal splendour of description, has nowhere a parallel. He is, however, sometimes unintelligible from allusion to unknown persons or unexplained events, and frequently metaphysical and mystical. John Keats may in some respects be considered as belonging to the school of Shelley. The poetry of Leigh Hunt, the survivor of all the early poets of the nineteenth century, is of a composite character, derived from Italian and classical sources.

From the numerous group of poets of a subordinate rank it is almost impossible to make a selection of names without injustice to those who are omitted. The poem of the Rev. Charles Wolfe on *The Burial of Sir John Moore* is one of those happy efforts which, like *The Elegy* and *The Cuckoo*, have of themselves proved sufficient to establish for ever the fame of their authors. The poetry of Henry Kirke White, like that of Michael Bruce, is chiefly interesting as an earnest of excellence that would probably have been developed by maturity of years. *Italy* and *The Pleasures of Memory*, by Samuel Rogers, are marked by elegance and refinement; and "a touching and tranquillizing sweetness" has been ascribed to the poetry of John Wilson, author of *The Isle of Palms* and *The City of the Plague*, but better known by his brilliant criticisms and other prose writings. Some of the religious pieces of James Montgomery, who combined the genius of the poet with the devotion of the Christian, are of a high order of merit; and in his poems of *Greenland* and *The Pelican Island*, many of the natural phenomena of the two hemispheres are finely and vigorously described. The history of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, furnishes a brilliant example of native, untutored talent. His poetry is more ideal than that of Burns, whom he resembles in pastoral beauty and simplicity; but in *Bonny Kilmeny* and *The Skylark* he soars into the regions of Spenser and Shelley. *The Queen's Wake*, a series of tales and ballads supposed to be sung

to Queen Mary at Holyrood, is his capital work, and was published in 1813. *The Farmer's Boy* of Robert Bloomfield, another poetic genius of humble, rustic birth, contains pleasing and faithful descriptions of rural English life. The names of Walter Savage Landor, Robert Pollok, author of *The Course of Time*, Bryan Walter Procter (Barry Cornwall), Mrs. Hemans, Miss Landon (L.E.L.), Mrs. Norton, and among the Scottish poets, Robert Tannahill, Allan Cunningham, and William Motherwell, afford examples of a numerous class of poetical writers to whose merits we can only render this general acknowledgment.

At the head of the poetical literature of the present day stands the name of Alfred Tennyson, the successor of Wordsworth in the laureateship. Amongst the more salient excellences of his poetry, the most pervading are the descriptive splendour that colours it in all its moods, from the empurpled glory of *Locksley Hall* to the serene effulgence of *Enoch Arden*, his unlimited command of melodious rhythm and fluent versification, his studious purity of style, and severe refinement of taste. Of *The Idylls of the King* one of his critics remarks, that, "in the history of the English language these poems will occupy a remarkable place, as examples of vigorous, unaffected, and almost unmixed Saxon;" and he adds, that "no language has surpassed in dignity the English of these poems."

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, perhaps the most gifted poetess that has appeared in any age, and her husband, Robert Browning, rank next to Tennyson in poetical eminence. Had Thomas Hood, whose fame is more popularly associated with his comic pieces, but who possessed in a high degree the gifts of imagination and pathos, devoted himself more exclusively to the cultivation of such poetry as *Eugene Aram's Dream*, and *The Bridge of Sighs*, it is difficult to limit the rank to which he might have attained as a poet.

Of American poets, the striking imagination and rhythmical beauty of *The Raven* by Allan Edgar Poe mark him as the most original of the group. The reputation of William Cullen Bryant is chiefly associated with his *Thanatopsis*, a poem wherein religious contemplation is finely blended with description, and which proves

his mastery of blank verse. His *Address to a Waterfowl* is one of his best known pieces. The most voluminous as well as the most popular of the Transatlantic poets is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose principal works are *Evangeline*, a beautiful tale in hexameter verse; *The Song of Hiawatha*, written in trochees without rhyme; and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*. *Excelsior* and *A Psalm of Life* are among the best known of his smaller pieces.

It has been already observed that in prose fiction the historical romance was predominant during the first period; but the domestic and didactic novels of Miss Austen and Miss Edgeworth, and the powerful narratives of Godwin, enjoyed no inconsiderable share of contemporary favour. Amongst the more popular of the numerous novelists who have recently divided with Dickens and Thackeray the attention of the reading public, we may mention Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot, (Miss Evans), Miss Muloch, the Rev. Charles Kingsley, and Anthony Trollope. The later novels of Bulwer, devoted to the portraiture of contemporary life, have met with as much success as those which in another field had gained him so much reputation.

In the Drama, which during this period holds a relatively subordinate position, the most effective acting tragedies were produced by Sheridan Knowles; while Tobin and Morton wrote farces and light comedy—a department which has more recently been successfully pursued by Douglas Jerrold and Tom Taylor. The plays of the versatile Bulwer also occupy a prominent place, and are frequently performed.

In Metaphysics and Ethics, the whole period embraces, amongst others, the names of Stewart, Brown, Mackintosh, Mill, Abercrombie; in Theology, Sumner, Hall, Foster, Chalmers, Newman, Stanley, Hare, Milman, Conybeare, Kitto, Rogers, Taylor, and Tulloch; in Political Economy, Bentham, Malthus, Ricardo, Mill, Whately, and M'Culloch; and in Biography, Lockhart, Dixon, Lord Campbell, Forster, Stirling, and G. H. Lewes. The talented and versatile writer last named has lately written popular and

valuable treatises on Physiology. Conspicuous among those writers who have operated influentially on the public mind by literary exposition of science and art are the names of Hugh Miller in Geology, and John Ruskin in Painting and Architecture.

In the department of Criticism and Belles Lettres, the writings of Lord Jeffrey, although he failed to forecast the influence of Wordsworth upon the poetry of his time, contain a recognised code of principles; and to his name may be added that of William Hazlitt, as equally distinguished for brilliance, but less measured and more capricious in his critical estimates. The refined and masterly prelections of Campbell upon the British Poets have already been alluded to; and it would be difficult to apportion the influence or results severally due to the editorial and critical performances of Sir Walter Scott, Gifford, Southey, Wilson, Brydges, Mackintosh, Hunt, De Quincey, Coleridge; and, in their general character, to the writings of Sidney Smith. Henry Hallam, the historian of the Literature of Europe, from the extent of his learning, as well as the depth and wisdom of his judgments, is likely to remain one of the greatest authorities on every topic on which he has delivered an opinion.

Historical talent has in no previous era of English literature shone with equal brilliance to that of the present century; and if the names of Macaulay, Hallam, Alison, and Lingard, might not be considered sufficient to justify the statement, the list could be amplified by those of Mitford, Grote, Thirlwall, Palgrave, Arnold, the talented American writer Prescott, and others scarcely, if at all, lower in the scale of merit. The Histories of Froude and Kinglake, now in progress, have attained an amount of attention proportioned to the peculiar talent of these authors.

Between Macaulay and Carlyle, the two writers who, as historians and essayists, have the most extensively impressed their style and opinions upon the mind of the present generation, there is a perfect contrast, both in style and opinion. If the writings of Macaulay possessed no other merit than the beauty and purity of their composition, they would be admired for that alone; whereas one of the most characteristic features of Carlyle is his utter

disregard of elegance or regularity, and not seldom of perspicuity; and it is needless to pursue the divergence between the champion of constitutional tenets and orthodox political and social traditions and the cynical and sweeping denouncer of time-honoured formulas and shams. In the phraseology and some other peculiarities of Carlyle, the German school has reached its culminating point; and the dominion he has obtained over many of the first intellects of his time proves the strength and originality of his genius. In word-painting, *The French Revolution, a History*, extinguishes all rivalry; and it is unnecessary to say how much his work entitled *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* have influenced public opinion on the character of Cromwell. Amongst his other works are *Sartor Resartus, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, Past and Present, Latter Day Pamphlets;* and his lectures on *Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, are characteristic emanations of his genius. Mr. Carlyle has just completed his voluminous *History of Frederick the Great.*

### SKETCH OF THE ORIGIN OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

The reign of James I. witnessed the birth of the Newspaper in England. Occasional pamphlets, containing meagre notices relating chiefly to continental affairs, were, in 1622, followed by the first regular periodical newspaper, entitled *The Certaine News of the Present Week*, and a swarm of ephemeral journals were issued during the period of the civil war. The censorship of the press decreed by the Long Parliament was deprecated by Milton in his tract upon the freedom of unlicensed printing. Sir Roger L'Estrange, who had been appointed licenser of the press after the Restoration, published *The Intelligencer* in 1663, and *The Observator* in 1680. The *London Gazette* had meanwhile been established in 1665. In the reign of Queen Anne, when the public appetite for news was stimulated by the victories of Marlborough, papers became more numerous, were published more frequently, and the Daily began to appear. The *Daily Courant* was established in 1709. The celebrated Letters of Junius were printed in the *Public Advertiser*, which, with the *North Briton* of

Wilkes, begun in 1762, may thus be regarded as affording the first examples of that influence on public opinion and public events that is now so powerfully exercised by the "Fourth Estate."

In 1731, Edward Cave, the bookseller, commenced *The Gentleman's Magazine*, which at first consisted of scraps of news and voluntary contributions, with slight pretensions to brilliancy or originality. This periodical, which still exists, is interesting from its early connection with Johnson, whose employment by its publisher materially contributed to its success, and by which, according to Boswell, Johnson probably obtained a tolerable livelihood. The *Monthly Review*, the first journal in Britain devoted to criticism, appeared in 1749, and was succeeded by the *Critical Review* in 1756. In 1802, an entirely new and immeasurably higher character was imparted to periodical literature by the *Edinburgh Review*, which was commenced under the auspices of Jeffrey and Sidney Smith, aided by Brougham, Horner, Mackintosh, and others; and it is scarcely necessary to allude to the splendour it has since derived from the contributions of the late Lord Macaulay. To oppose this formidable phalanx of Whig talent, the *Quarterly Review* was established in 1809, under the leadership of Gifford, supported by Canning, Southey, Scott, Croker, and Lockhart. The *Westminster Review* was established by the disciples of Jeremy Bentham in 1824. *Blackwood's Magazine* (1817), was another Tory rival of the *Edinburgh Review*. The class to which it belongs admits matter of a more miscellaneous and original character than the Reviews, being more extensively devoted to the Belles Lettres.

## CHAPTER II.

### SPECIMENS FROM THE POETS.

Scott—Wordsworth—Coleridge—Byron—Campbell—Shelley—Macaulay—Aytoun—Tennyson.

### SIR WALTER SCOTT—1771-1832.

Sir Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh, and received his education at the High School and the University of his native city. He was a member of the Scottish Bar, and besides being Sheriff of Selkirkshire, was one of the Principal Clerks of Session, a lucrative and honourable office. Having purchased the estate of Abbotsford, he there exercised a hospitality commensurate with the generosity of his nature and the princely sums produced by his unprecedentedly popular works. It was the grand error of his life that he had entered upon a career of mercantile speculations; and as a partner of the printing and bookselling firms of the Ballantynes, the bankruptcy of the celebrated publisher Constable involved him in ruin. His determination, at the age of fifty-five, not to retrieve his own fortunes, but by his exertions to prevent any of his creditors from losing to the extent of a farthing, is a noble example of self-sacrifice. He accomplished his purpose; but it was at the expense of his life. His health, bodily and mental, broke down under the gigantic struggle; and after a tour on the Continent, undertaken in the vain attempt to restore his shattered system, he died at Abbotsford in 1832.

Scott's literary career may be summarily regarded as presenting two divisions, the first of which was distinguished by the blaze of his success as the modern minstrel of chivalrous and feudal romance. The publication of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* in 1805 constitutes an era in poetry, as the most distinguished of Scott's contemporaries and successors were irresistibly swayed by his example and the success of his experiment to mould their inspira-

tions more or less upon the narrative form. *Marmion* followed in 1808, and *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810. The battle piece in the former is probably unequalled in literature. The next period is marked by the appearance of *Waverley* in 1814, the first of that series of historical romances upon whose merits and reception by an enchanted public it is unnecessary to dilate; neither do we consider it necessary to enumerate a list that is familiar to all readers. Suffice it to say, that in fertility of imagination and the power of creating and depicting character, Scott is second only to Shakspeare; and that his influence on more than one department of prose composition, particularly history, can be distinctly and extensively traced. Most of the Waverley novels were published anonymously; but Scott declared his authorship of them at the Theatrical Fund Dinner in Edinburgh in 1827. His *Life of Napoleon* is now admitted to possess greater merit than was at first conceded to it.

### FROM "THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL."

#### BRANKSOME HALL.

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
  Knight, and page, and household squire,
Loitered through the lofty hall,
  Or crowded round the ample fire.
The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
  Lay stretched upon the rushy floor,
And urged, in dreams, the forest race,
  From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
  Hung their shields in Branksome Hall;
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
  Brought them their steeds from bower to stall;
    Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
    Waited, duteous, on them all:
    They were all knights of mettle true,
    Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword, and spur on heel;

They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night:
They lay down to rest
With corslet laced,
Pillowed on buckler cold and hard;
They carved at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barred.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten:
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
Stood saddled in stable day and night,
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
And with Jedwood-axe at saddle bow:
A hundred more fed free in stall:—
Such was the custom of Branksome Hall.

### MELROSE ABBEY.

If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St. David's ruined pile;
And home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

## FROM "MARMION."

### THE BATTLE OF FLODDEN.

The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watched them as they crossed
The Till by Twisel Bridge.

High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the caverned cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet-clang,
Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host Lord Surrey lead?
What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand?—
O Douglas, for thy leading wand!
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry,—"Saint Andrew and our right!"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannock-bourne!—
The precious hour has passed in vain,
And England's host has gained the plain;

Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden-hill.

* * * *

"But, see! look up—on Flodden bent,
The Scottish foe has fired his tent."—
And sudden, as he[1] spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march, their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon-point they close.—
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth
And fiends in upper air;
O life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.

* * * *

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then marked they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumèd crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave;
But nought distinct they see:
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook, and falchions flashed amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.

[1] The speaker is Blount, one of Marmion's squires.

In the following spirited passage is described the death of Lord Marmion, the hero of the story:—

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:—
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
Redeem my pennon,—charge again!
Cry—'Marmion to the rescue!'—Vain!
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!—
Yet my last thought is England's:—fly,
To Dacre bare my signet-ring;
Tell him his squadrons up to bring:—
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie;
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield:
Edmund is down;—my life is reft;—
The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost.—
Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets! fly!
Leave Marmion here alone—to die."
* * * *
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,
And—STANLEY! was the cry;—
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye:
With dying hand, above his head
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!—
"Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!".....
Were the last words of Marmion.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell;
For still the Scots, around their king,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor vanward wing,
Where Huntley, and where Home?—
O for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Oliver,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!

Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride!
In vain the wish—for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.

* * * *

The English shafts in volleys hailed,
In headlong charge their horse assailed;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep,
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their king.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that they fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;—
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shattered bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their king, their lords, their mightiest, low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swollen and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disordered, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.

A TRIBUTE TO WOMAN.

O woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made,
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!

FROM "THE LADY OF THE LAKE."

A FATHER'S TEAR.

Some feelings are to mortals given
With less of earth in them than heaven:
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH—1770-1850.

William Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, in 1770, and studied at the University of Cambridge. He was intended for the Church, but his inclination to follow the pursuit, and that alone, for which he was so eminently gifted, was furthered by a legacy of £900 from a young friend named Calvert, who bequeathed it to him with a request that he would devote himself entirely to poetry. The outward life of Wordsworth presents few notable incidents. In 1790 he made a tour to the Continent, and in France he became acquainted with some of the Girondists, his sympathies being then entirely with the French Revolution. In 1813 he settled down at Rydal Mount on Lake Windermere, and was about that time made Distributor of Stamps for the county of Westmoreland, with a salary of £500 a year. He succeeded Southey as poet laureate in 1843, and died in 1850.

TO THE CUCKOO.

O blithe new-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear,
That seems to fill the whole air's space,
As loud far off as near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love—
Still longed for, never seen!

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, fairy place,
That is fit home for thee!

## SONNET

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1803.

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;

Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

## THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US.

The World is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away—a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune,
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,—
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

## ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it has been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more!

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

* * * * *

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our Infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily further from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her natural kind;
And, even with something of a mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

* * * * *

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The songs of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble, like a guilty thing surprised!
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us—cherish—and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor man, nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither,—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We, in thought, will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from thy sight,—
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy,
Which, having been, must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And oh, ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Think not of any severing of your loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight,
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the brooks, which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet;

The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live;
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears;
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

## NATURE MYTHOLOGIZED BY THE GREEKS.

FROM "THE EXCURSION."—BOOK IV.

—In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman, stretched
On the soft grass, through half a summer's day,
With music lulled his indolent repose:
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,
When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetched,
Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,
A beardless youth, who touched a golden lute,
And filled the illumined groves with ravishment.
The nightly hunter, lifting up his eyes
Towards the crescent moon, with grateful heart
Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed
That timely light, to share his joyous sport:
And hence, a beaming goddess with her nymphs,
Across the lawn and through the darksome grove
(Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes,
By echo multiplied from rock or cave),
Swept in the storm of chase, as moon and stars
Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,
When winds are blowing strong. The traveller slaked
His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thanked
The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,
Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed
Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.
The Zephyrs, fanning as they passed, their wings,
Lacked not, for love, fair objects, whom they wooed
With gentle whisper. Withered boughs grotesque,
Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,
From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth,
In the low vale, or on steep mountain-side;
And sometimes intermixed with stirring horns

Of the live deer, or goat's depending beard,—
These were the lurking satyrs, a wild brood
Of gamesome deities; or Pan himself,
The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring god!

## TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

Sweet Highland girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head:
And these gray rocks; this household lawn;
These trees, a veil just half withdrawn;
This fall of water, that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake;
This little bay, a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy abode;
In truth, together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream;
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep!
Yet, dream and vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart:
God shield thee to thy latest years!
I neither know thee nor thy peers;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away;
For never saw I mien, or face,
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered like a random seed,
Remote from men, thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness:
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a mountaineer.
A face with gladness overspread!
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred!
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts, that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech:

A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life!
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee, who art so beautiful?
O happy pleasure! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell;
Adopt your homely ways and dress,
A shepherd, thou a shepherdess!
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality:
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea: and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see!
Thy elder brother I would be,
Thy father, anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had; and going hence
I bear away my recompense.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our memory, feel that she hath eyes:
Then, why should I be loth to stir?
I feel this place was made for her;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland girl! from thee to part;
For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;
And thee, the spirit of them all!

## SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE—1772-1834.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who has been termed "the most imaginative of the poets," was born in Devonshire, his father being vicar of St. Mary Ottery in that county. From Christ Church Hospital, to which he had received a presentation, he passed to

Cambridge, but left it without obtaining a degree; and finding himself without any means of support, he enlisted as a trooper in a regiment of Light Dragoons. He was after some months rescued by his friends; but irresolution of purpose was the fatal defect in his character, and his career presents a series of unaccomplished projects. He contracted the habit of opium-eating, and after various vicissitudes, we find him an honoured inmate of the house of his friend Gilman the surgeon in Highgate, under whose care he had recovered from the effects of the deleterious drug before his death in 1834. Coleridge exercised a powerful influence on the intellect of his time by his prose works as well as by his poetry. Amongst them are *The Friend*, *Lay Sermons*, *Biographia Literaria*, *Aids to Reflection*, &c., besides lectures and contributions to periodicals. The conversational powers of Coleridge were the wonder of his age, and the most gifted of his contemporaries flocked to his retreat, to listen to the tide of lofty and melodious eloquence that flowed from his lips. We conclude this brief sketch by an extract from Carlyle's characteristic description of the poet:—"Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate Hill, in those years, looking down on London and its smoke tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle; attracting towards him the thoughts of innumerable brave souls still engaged there. His express contributions to poetry, philosophy, or any specific province of human literature or enlightenment, had been small and sadly intermittent; but he had, especially among young inquiring men, a higher than literary, a kind of prophetic or magician character. He was thought to hold, he alone in England, the key of German and other transcendentalisms; knew the sublime secret of believing by 'the reason' what the 'understanding' had been obliged to fling out as incredible; and could still, after Hume and Voltaire had done their best and worst with him, profess himself an orthodox Christian, and say and point to the Church of England, with its singular old rubrics and surplices at All-hallowtide, '*Esto perpetua*.' A sublime man; who, alone in those dark days, had saved his crown of spiritual manhood; escaping from the black materialisms, and revolutionary deluges, with 'God, Free-

dom, Immortality,' still his: a king of men. The practical intellects of the world did not much heed him, or carelessly reckoned him a metaphysical dreamer: but to the rising spirits of the young generation he had this dusky sublime character; and sat there as a kind of Magus, girt in mystery and enigma, his Dodona oak-grove (Mr. Gilman's house at Highgate) whispering strange things, uncertain whether oracles or jargon."

### YOUTH AND AGE.

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woful when!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er airy cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly then it flashed along!—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather,
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
Oh! the joys that came down shower-like
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!
Ere I was old?—Ah, woful Ere,
Which tells me youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet
'Tis known that you and I were one;
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that thou art gone?
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled;
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:

But spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will,
That youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismist,
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

## LOVE, HOPE, AND PATIENCE, IN EDUCATION.

O'er wayward childhood would'st thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces;
Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy graces,
And in thine own heart let them first keep school.
For, as old Atlas on his broad neck places
Heaven's starry globe, and there sustains it,—so
Do these upbear the little world below
Of Education,—Patience, Love, and Hope.
Methinks I see them grouped in seemly show,
The straightened arms upraised, the palms aslope,
And robes that touching, as adown they flow,
Distinctly blend, like snow embossed in snow.

Oh, part them never! If Hope prostrate lie,
Love too will sink and die.
But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive
From her own life that Hope is yet alive;
And, bending o'er with soul-transfusing eyes,
And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
Woos back the fleeting spirit, and half supplies:—
Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave to Love.

Yet haply there will come a weary day,
When overtasked at length
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
Then, with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
And both supporting does the work of both.

## FROM "THE ANCIENT MARINER."

### AN EQUATORIAL CALM.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot:—O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

## HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arvé and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,

How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air, and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.
Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy,
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there,
As in her natural form, swelled vast to heaven!
Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks, and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.
Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale!
Oh, struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink;
Companion of the morning star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual springs?
And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came),
Here let the billows stiffen and have rest?
Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!

Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!
Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the element!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!
Thou, too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene,
Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast—
Thou too, again, stupendous Mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, a while bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow trav'lling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest like a vapoury cloud
To rise before me—Rise, oh, ever rise!
Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth!
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

## LORD BYRON—1788-1824.

Lord Byron was born in London, and has in his poem of *Lochnagar* left some record of his early training at the residence of his mother (one of the Gordons of Gight) in Aberdeenshire. When he first burst upon the poetical firmament—

> "As some fierce comet of tremendous size,
> To which the stars did reverence as it passed,"

he became the idol of fashionable society; and it may be safely

affirmed that no poet ever excited such enthusiasm, or was an object of so much personal admiration.

The first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, published in 1812, and written in the Spenserian stanza, were the fruit of two years' travel on the Continent; and these were followed in 1813 by *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*, and in 1814 by *The Corsair* and *Lara*. It was the overpowering splendour and success of these intensely impassioned poems that induced Scott to retire at once from the domain of poetry into a field where no competitor could cope with him. In 1815 Byron married Miss Millbank, and in the following year he left his native country in a fit of indignation at the manner in which his domestic affairs had been discussed, and the treatment he had himself received in connection with his unhappy and uncongenial marriage. He never saw England again, but passed his time in Venice, at the Lake of Geneva, and other parts of the Continent, for the most part in a round of systematically frantic dissipation. The struggle of the Greeks for independence, which then rivetted the attention of Europe, at length "raised up the buried man." He cast off his ignoble slough and embarked for Greece, where he devoted his energy and fortune to the cause of the patriots, and had begun to win the respect of his countrymen for the earnest thus given of a future more worthy of his splendid endowments, when he was cut off by fever at Missolonghi in 1824.

The principal poems of Byron not already mentioned are, the concluding and most splendid cantos of *Childe Harold; The Siege of Corinth; Mazeppa; The Vision of Judgment*, a satire on Southey; and *Don Juan*. His principal dramas are, *Cain*, *Manfred*, *Marino Faliero*, *The Two Foscari*, *Sardanapalus*, *Werner*, *Heaven and Earth*, and *The Deformed Transformed*.

FROM "THE GIAOUR."

GREECE.

He who hath bent him o'er the dead,
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress,

(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),
And marked the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fixed yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now;
And but for that chill, changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;
So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
The first, last look by Death revealed!
Such is the aspect of this shore;—
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more!
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of Feeling pass'd away!
Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
Which gleams, but warms no more its cherished earth!

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land, from plain to mountain-cave,
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave!
Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
That this is all remains of thee?
Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylæ?
These waters blue that round you lave,
Oh servile offspring of the free—
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
These scenes, their story not unknown,
Arise, and make again your own;
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires;

And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear,
That Tyranny shall quake to hear,
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too will rather die than shame:
For Freedom's battle, once begun,
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft, is ever won.
Bear witness, Greece, thy living page!
Attest it many a deathless age!
While kings, in dusky darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,
Thy heroes, though the general doom
Hath swept the column from their tomb,
A mightier monument command,—
The mountains of their native land!
There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
The graves of those that cannot die!
'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
Each step from splendour to disgrace;
Enough—no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
Yes! self-abasement paved the way
To villain-bonds and despot-sway.

## FROM "MANFRED."

### A MIDNIGHT SCENE IN ROME.

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learned the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watchdog bayed beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song

Began and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appeared to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot—Where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levelled battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth ;—
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection !
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which softened down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old !—
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.

## FROM "CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE."

### PERSONIFICATION OF WAR.

Lo ! where the Giant on the mountain stands,
His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun,
With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,
And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon;
Restless it rolls, now fixed, and now anon
Flashing afar,—and at his iron feet
Destruction cowers, to mark what deeds are done;
For on this morn three potent nations meet,
To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most sweet

By Heaven ! it is a splendid sight to see
(For one who hath no friend, no brother there)
Their rival scarfs of mixed embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air !
What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey !
All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
The Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,
And Havoc scarce for joy can number their array.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

Stop !—for thy tread is on an Empire's dust !
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below !
Is the spot marked with no colossal bust,
Or column trophied for triumphal show ?
None ; but the moral's truth tells simpler so:
As the ground was before, thus let it be ;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow !
And is this all the world has gained by thee,
Thou first and last of fields ! king-making Victory ?

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men ;
A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;
But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell !

Did ye not hear it ?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street:
On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But, hark !—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat ;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
Arm ! arm ! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar !

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain: he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rushed into the field, and, foremost, fighting, fell.

Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs

Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise?

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While thronged the citizens, with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come! they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's Gathering" rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard; and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass,
Which, now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon—beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve—in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight—brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn—the marshalling in arms,—the day,
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent,
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

### LAKE OF GENEVA.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing

Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

*

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darkened Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

* * * *

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

* * * *

The sky is changed!—and such a change! O night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

### THOMAS CAMPBELL—1777-1844.

Thomas Campbell was born at Glasgow, and was educated in the University of that city, where he distinguished himself by his proficiency in Greek. The profits he derived from the sale of *The Pleasures of Hope* enabled him to visit the Continent in 1800, and he was present as a spectator at the battle of Hohenlinden. In 1820 he became editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*, and continued to be so till 1830. He died at Boulogne in 1844, and his body was brought to England and interred in Westminster Abbey. The more important of his pieces not previously mentioned, are *Gertrude of Wyoming*, and *Theodric;* and among his minor poems, *Lochiel's Warning* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter.*

#### BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone ;
By each gun the lighted brand,
In a bold determined hand,
And the prince of all the land
Led them on.—

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine ;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line :
It was ten of April morn by the chime :
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death ;
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.—

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene ;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
" Hearts of oak ! " our captains cried ; when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.—

Again ! again ! again !
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back ;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom :—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail ;
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.—

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave ;
" Ye are brothers ! ye are men !
And we conquer but to save :—
So peace instead of death let us bring ;
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."—
* * * *
Now joy, Old England, raise !
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine-cup shines in light ;
And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore !—

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou :
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave !
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave !—

## YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND.

### A NAVAL ODE.

Ye Mariners of England !
That guard our native seas ;
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze !

Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe !
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave !—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave :
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwark,
No towers along the steep ;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak,
She quells the floods below,—
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow ;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor-flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn ;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors !
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow ;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

## FROM "THE PLEASURES OF HOPE."

### HOPE'S ENCOURAGEMENT OF YOUTHFUL GENIUS.

"Turn, child of Heaven, thy rapture-lightened eye
To Wisdom's walks, the sacred Nine are nigh :
Hark ! from bright spires that gild the Delphian height,
From streams that wander in eternal light,

Ranged on their hill, Harmonia's daughters swell
The mingling tones of horn, and harp, and shell;
Deep from his vaults the Loxian murmurs flow,[1]
And Pythia's awful organ peals below.

"Beloved of Heaven! the smiling Muse shall shed
Her moonlight halo on thy beauteous head;
Shall swell thy heart to rapture unconfined,
And breathe a holy madness o'er thy mind.
I see thee roam her guardian power beneath,
And talk with spirits on the midnight heath;
Inquire of guilty wanderers whence they came,
And ask each blood-stained form his earthly name;
Then weave in rapid verse the deeds they tell,
And read the trembling world the tales of hell.

* * * *

"Yes; to thy tongue shall seraph-words be given,
And power on earth to plead the cause of Heaven;
The proud, the cold untroubled heart of stone,
That never mused on sorrow but its own,
Unlocks a generous store at thy command,
Like Horeb's rocks beneath the prophet's hand.[2]
The living lumber of his kindred earth,
Charmed into soul, receives a second birth,
Feels thy dread power another heart afford,
Whose passion-touched harmonious strings accord
True as the circling spheres to Nature's plan;
And man, the brother, lives the friend of man.

"Bright as the pillar rose at Heaven's command,
When Israel marched along the desert land,
Blazed through the night on lonely wilds afar,
And told the path,—a never-setting star:
So, heavenly Genius, in thy course divine,
Hope is thy star, her light is ever thine."

## LOCHIEL'S WARNING.

WIZARD.—LOCHIEL.

*Wiz.* Lochiel! Lochiel! beware of the day
When the Lowlands shall meet thee in battle array!
For a field of the dead rushes red on my sight,
And the clans of Culloden are scattered in fight.
They rally, they bleed, for their kingdom and crown;
Woe, woe to the riders that trample them down!

[1] "Loxias is the name frequently given to Apollo by Greek writers; it is met with more than once in the Choephoræ of Æschylus."

[2] See Exodus, xvii. 3, 5, 6.

Proud Cumberland prances, insulting the slain,
And their hoof-beaten bosoms are trod to the plain.
But hark! through the fast-flashing lightning of war,
What steed to the desert flies frantic and far?
'Tis thine, O Glenullin! whose bride shall await,
Like a love-lighted watchfire, all night at the gate.
A steed comes at morning: no rider is there;
But its bridle is red with the sign of despair.
Weep, Albyn! to death and captivity led!
Oh weep! but thy tears cannot number the dead:
For a merciless sword on Culloden shall wave,
Culloden! that reeks with the blood of the brave.

*Loch.* Go, preach to the coward, thou death-telling seer!
Or, if gory Culloden so dreadful appear,
Draw, dotard, around thy old wavering sight
This mantle, to cover the phantoms of fright.

*Wiz.* Ha! laugh'st thou, Lochiel, my vision to scorn?
Proud bird of the mountain, thy plume shall be torn!
Say, rushed the bold eagle exultingly forth
From his home, in the dark-rolling clouds of the north?
Lo! the death-shot of foemen outspeeding, he rode
Companionless, bearing destruction abroad;
But down let him stoop from his havoc on high!
Ah! home let him speed,—for the spoiler is nigh.
Why flames the far summit? Why shoot to the blast
Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast?
'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven
From his eyry, that beacons the darkness of heaven.
Oh, crested Lochiel! the peerless in might,
Whose banners arise on the battlements' height,
Heaven's fire is around thee, to blast and to burn;
Return to thy dwelling! all lonely return!
For the blackness of ashes shall mark where it stood,
And a wild mother scream o'er her famishing brood.

*Loch.* False Wizard, avaunt! I have marshalled my clan;
Their swords are a thousand, their bosoms are one!
They are true to the last of their blood and their breath,
And like reapers descend to the harvest of death.
Then welcome be Cumberland's steed to the shock!
Let him dash his proud foam like a wave on the rock!
But woe to his kindred, and woe to his cause,
When Albyn her claymore indignantly draws;
When her bonneted chieftains to victory crowd,
Clanronald the dauntless, and Moray the proud,
All plaided and plumed in their tartan array——

*Wiz.* ——Lochiel, Lochiel! beware of the day;
For, dark and despairing, my sight I may seal,
But man cannot cover what God would reveal;
'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.
I tell thee, Culloden's dread echoes shall ring
With the bloodhounds that bark for thy fugitive king.
Lo! anointed by Heaven with the vials of wrath,
Behold, where he flies on his desolate path!
Now, in darkness and billows, he sweeps from my sight:
Rise, rise, ye wild tempests, and cover his flight!.....
'Tis finished. Their thunders are hushed on the moors:
Culloden is lost, and my country deplores.
But where is the iron-bound prisoner? where?
For the red eye of battle is shut in despair.
Say, mounts he the ocean-wave, banished, forlorn,
Like a limb from his country cast bleeding and torn?
Ah, no! for a darker departure is near;
The war-drum is muffled, and black is the bier;
His death-bell is tolling: oh! mercy, dispel
Yon sight, that it freezes my spirit to tell!
Life flutters convulsed in his quivering limbs,
And his blood-streaming nostril in agony swims.
Accursed be the fagots that blaze at his feet,
Where his heart shall be thrown ere it ceases to beat,
With the smoke of its ashes to poison the gale——

*Loch.* ——Down, soothless insulter! I trust not the tale:
For never shall Albyn a destiny meet
So black with dishonour, so foul with retreat.
Though my perishing ranks should be strewed in their gore,
Like ocean-weeds heaped on the surf-beaten shore,
Lochiel, untainted by flight or by chains,
While the kindling of life in his bosom remains,
Shall victor exult, or in death be laid low,
With his back to the field, and his feet to the foe!
And leaving in battle no blot on his name,
Look proudly to heaven from the deathbed of fame.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY—1792–1822.

This transcendently imaginative writer, who has been termed the "Poet of Poets," was the son of Sir Timothy Shelley, and was born in Sussex in 1792. He was the friend of Keats and Byron, and was drowned while making a voyage in a pleasure boat in the

Mediterranean in 1822. *Prometheus Unbound* is one of the grandest of his poems.

### TO A SKYLARK.

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight,
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view.

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Langnor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

## LORD MACAULAY—1800–1859.

There is no great writer of the present generation whose reputation is less likely to yield to the influence of time than that of the late Lord Macaulay. More excursive and ingenious in speculation, more catholic in spirit, and more lively and picturesque in illustration, he is no less weighty and trenchant than Johnson, with whom, both in regard to splendour of diction and influence on the national intellect, he may be paralleled without impairing

the lustre of either of these great names. His ingenious and masterly solutions of important historical problems, his admirable literary criticisms, the mine of reflection, of argument, of wit, philosophy, and learning, to be found in so many of his vivid biographical sketches, entitle Macaulay to be regarded as the greatest of English essayists. His *History of England*, now one of the standard models of prose composition, outstrips all its predecessors in that department of literary art. It may be questioned if any writer equally fitted by nature, by cultivation, and by experience, ever entered upon a similar undertaking. With the sagacity of the philosopher and the imagination of the poet, and with senatorial and administrative ability of a high rank, —endowed, besides, like the great lexicographer, with a memory fitted to grapple with whole libraries, and a vigour of intellect that no amount of labour or research could fatigue,—he has evolved, out of a stupendous mass of scattered material, a fabric that rises into harmony and order like the walls of Thebes under the magic of Amphion's lute. Although his theory of historical composition admits of a variety of detail ignored by his predecessors, he is surpassed by none of them in dignity and chastity of style, and he has in a far higher degree combined the artistic principle with the power of delighting the fancy and enlisting the sympathies of the reader. The charges of political bias and a tendency to exaggeration in some of his portraits, may be conceded with slight prejudice to the substantial and transcendent merit of his valuable and fascinating work; and in the present day it is a conspicuous and inestimable feature in that sphere of composition, that his most powerful delineations owe none of their force to an affectation of novelty, or to that counterfeit of depth and originality, violent and revolting paradox.

Lord Macaulay's brilliant papers were in 1843 published in a collection entitled *Critical and Historical Essays contributed to the Edinburgh Review;* but he also wrote various biographical articles for the *Encyclopedia Britannica.* The first two volumes of his *History of England* appeared in 1848. He did not live to complete this noble work, and the fifth volume was published

after his death in the fragmentary state in which he left it. His poetical works include *The Lays of Ancient Rome; Ivry*, a song of the Huguenots; and *The Armada*, a fragment. They are all admirable specimens of ballad poetry.

Thomas Babington Macaulay was born at Rothley Temple in Leicestershire in 1800, and was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where his distinction as a scholar and student gave earnest of his future greatness. He adopted the Bar as his profession, and in 1830 entered Parliament as Member for the borough of Calne. In 1834 he went out to India as legal adviser to the Supreme Council of Calcutta, and it may be easily inferred how much of the graphic power that characterizes his sketches of Clive and Hastings is owing to his residence on the theatre of their miraculous achievements. After his return to England he became Secretary of War, and in the following year was elected Member of Parliament for the City of Edinburgh. In 1846 he was appointed Paymaster-General of the Forces, but his political career was interrupted in 1847, when he was unseated by his Edinburgh constituents; and it may be presumed that the opportunity thus afforded of devoting himself more exclusively to the composition of his great work was not unwelcome. By his unsolicited re-election in 1852, Edinburgh redeemed the odium it had incurred by his factious rejection; but his health had begun to fail, and in 1856 he resigned his seat. In 1857 he was made Baron Macaulay of Rothley Temple, and died in 1859.

FROM "THE LAYS OF ANCIENT ROME."

THE OFFER OF HORATIUS TO DEFEND THE BRIDGE.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the gate:

"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods;

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame.

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the State;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:

Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

### THE FALL OF THE BRIDGE.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all.
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!"

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the further shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane;
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free;
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.

"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

"O Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain;
And fast his blood was flowing,
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armour,
And spent with changing blows:
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing place:

But his limbs were borne up bravely
  By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
  Bare bravely up his chin.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
  "Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
  We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
  "And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
  Was never seen before."

And now he feels the bottom;
  Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
  To press his gory hands;
And now with shouts and clapping,
  And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-gate,
  Borne by the joyous crowd.

### PROFESSOR AYTOUN.

William Edmonstoune Aytoun was born in Edinburgh in 1813, and is Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature in the University of his native city. He is well known by his humorous contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine;* and his *Firmilian, a Spasmodic Tragedy*, published under the pseudonym of Percy T. Jones, is a clever specimen of mock-heroic satire. His poetical reputation is founded upon *The Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*, from which the subjoined passage will show with what success he treads in the footsteps of Scott.

#### FROM "THE BURIAL MARCH OF DUNDEE."

THE CHARGE OF THE CLANS AT KILLIECRANKIE, AND DEATH OF THE GRÆME.

Soon we heard a challenge trumpet
  Sounding in the Pass below,
And the distant tramp of horses,
  And the voices of the foe:
Down we crouched amid the bracken,
  Till the Lowland ranks drew near,

Panting like the hounds in summer,
When they scent the stately deer.
From the dark defile emerging,
Next we saw the squadrons come,
Leslie's foot and Leven's troopers
Marching to the tuck of drum;
Through the scattered wood of birches,
O'er the broken ground and heath,
Wound the long battalion slowly,
Till they gained the field beneath;
Then we bounded from our covert.—
Judge how looked the Saxons then,
When they saw the rugged mountain
Start to life with armed men!
Like a tempest down the ridges
Swept the hurricane of steel,
Rose the slogan of Macdonald—
Flashed the broadsword of Lochiel.
Vainly sped the withering volley
'Mongst the foremost of our band—
On we poured until we met them,
Foot to foot and hand to hand.
Horse and man went down like drift-wood
When the floods are black at Yule,
And their carcasses are whirling
In the Garry's deepest pool.
Horse and man went down before us—
Living foe there tarried none
On the field of Killiecrankie,
When that stubborn fight was done.

And the evening star was shining
On Schehallion's distant head,
When we wiped our bloody broadswords,
And returned to count the dead.
There we found him gashed and gory,
Stretched upon the cumbered plain,
As he told us where to seek him,
In the thickest of the slain.
And a smile was on his visage,
For within his dying ear
Pealed the joyful note of triumph,
And the clansmen's clamorous cheer:
So, amidst the battle's thunder,
Shot, and steel, and scorching flame,
In the glory of his manhood
Passed the spirit of the Græme!

## ALFRED TENNYSON.

Alfred Tennyson, the son of a clergyman in Lincolnshire, was born at Somersby in 1810. He succeeded Wordsworth in the laureateship in 1850. So early as 1830 he published a volume of poems, which in three years afterwards was followed by another, containing some of the pieces that had previously appeared, with the addition of several new ones. Amongst those which elicited an acknowledgment of merit that had been refused to the first production, we may mention *The Palace of Art*, *The May Queen*, *The Lotos Eaters*, and *A Dream of Fair Women*. It was by the publication of two volumes in 1842, containing, with a reprint of some of his former pieces, the new poems of *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, *The Talking Oak*, *Locksley Hall*, *Godiva*, and others, that his reputation was decidedly established. His subsequent works have continued to manifest increasing power and mastery of his art, amongst those not already named being, *The Princess*, *a Medley*; and *Maud*. The story of *Enoch Arden* in his latest volume, of which the apparent simplicity is the result of that refinement of art that cannot be distinguished from nature, is a masterpiece of pathos. *In Memoriam* consists of a series of elegiac verses to the memory of the friend of his youth, Arthur Hallam.

### THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of death
Rode the Six Hundred.
"Charge!" was the Captain's cry,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of death
Rode the Six Hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;

Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well;
Into the jaws of death,
Into the mouth of hell,
Rode the Six Hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed all at once in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered;
Plunged in the battery smoke,
Fiercely the line they broke;
Strong was the sabre stroke;
Making an army reel
Shaken and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not—
Not the Six Hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
They that had struck so well
Rode through the jaws of death,
Half a league back again,
Up from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them—
Left of Six Hundred.

Honour the brave and bold!
Long shall the tale be told,
Yea, when our babes are old—
How they rode onward!

## THE BROOK.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges;
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

I chatter over stony ways,
  In little sharps and trebles;
I bubble into eddying bays,
  I babble on the pebbles.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
  To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
  With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
  And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake
  Upon me, as I travel,
With many a silvery water-break
  Above the golden gravel.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
  I slide by hazel covers,
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
  That grow for happy lovers.

I murmur under moon and stars
  In brambly wildernesses,
I linger by my shingly bars,
  I loiter round my cresses.

And out again I curve and flow
  To join the brimming river;
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

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